

A
0
0
1
0
5
2
6
3
5

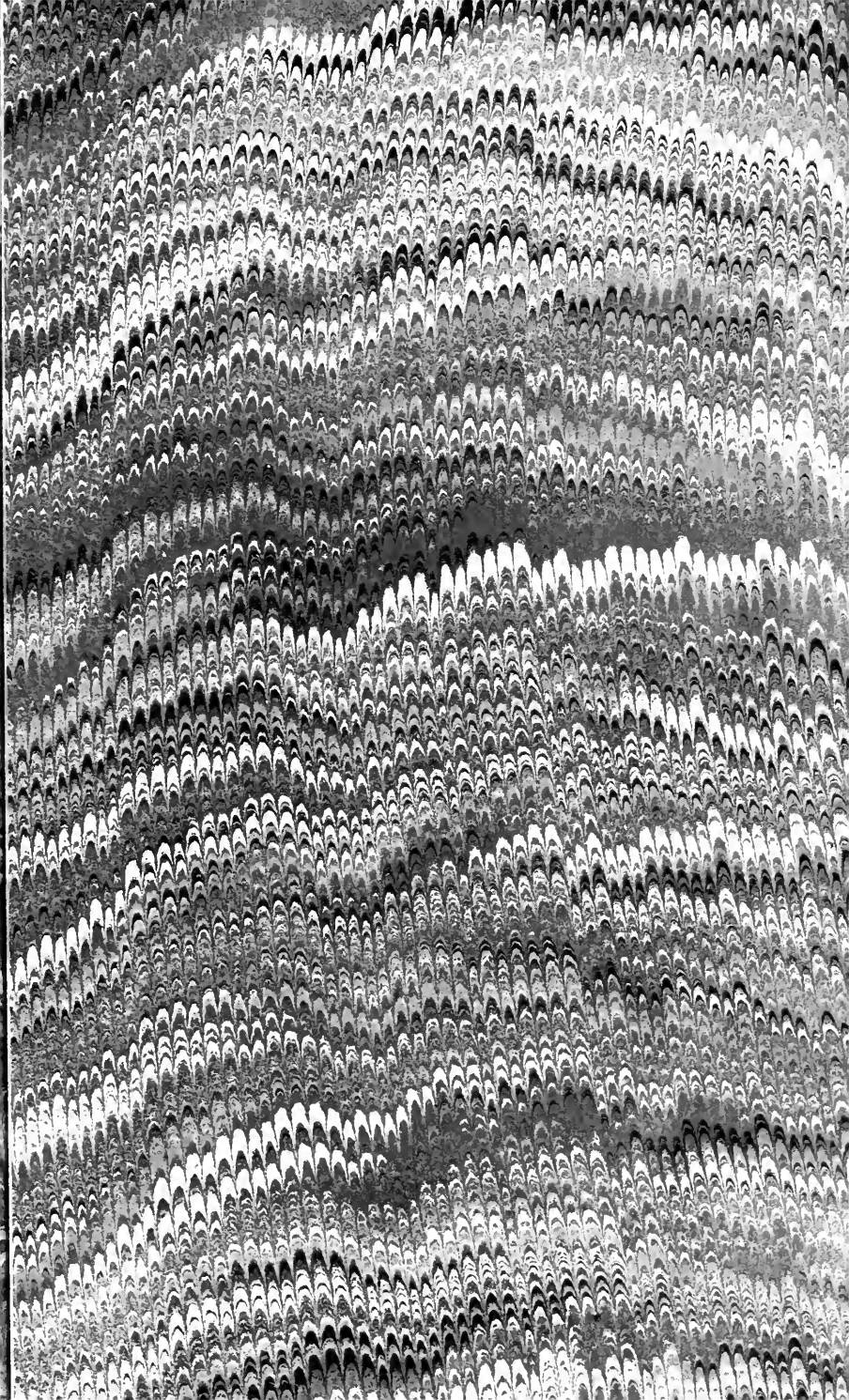




THE LIBRARY
OF
THE UNIVERSITY
OF CALIFORNIA
RIVERSIDE

Ex Libris

C. K. OGDEN



56/-
none

By Thomas Bruce, Esq.
Editor of the Times
argued with Haylett, Hunt & Hunt



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2007 with funding from
Microsoft Corporation

Barnes, Thomas

Parliamentary Portraits ;

OR

SKETCHES

OF THE

PUBLIC CHARACTER

OF SOME OF THE

MOST DISTINGUISHED SPEAKERS

OF THE

HOUSE OF COMMONS.



ORIGINALLY PRINTED IN THE EXAMINER.

Dica pur quanto sà rancor severo :
Contro le sue saette ho doppio usbergo ;
Non conosco interesse e son sincero.
Non ha l'invidia nel mio petto albergo ;
Solo zelo lo stil m'adatta in mano ;
E per util comune i fogli vergo.

3 Sat. SALVAT. ROS.

LONDON :

**PRINTED FOR BALDWIN, CRADOCK, AND JOY,
47, PATERNOSTER ROW,
AND R. HUNTER, ST. PAUL'S CHURCH-YARD.**

1815.

JN678

B3

REPUBLIC OF THE UNITED STATES

OF AMERICA

HOUSE OF COMMONS

OFFICE OF THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

THE HOUSE OF COMMONS
HAS THE HONOR TO
RECEIVE OF THE
CLERK OF THE HOUSE
THE FOLLOWING
DOCUMENTS

LOAN

PRINTED FOR BALDWIN, CRADOCK, AND JOHNSON

C. Baldwin, Printer,
New Bridge Street, London.

been partly instrumental in showing to the

TO

public, what I myself always knew, that the

LEIGH HUNT, ESQ.

merely an ingenious politician can occasionally

supporting his private opinion, has also a

regard for the honour of the nation, and the

MY DEAR HUNT,

all considerations of a private and self-interest

IN addition to the strong motive of a long

and sincere friendship, existing from the

time of our school-days, I am bound to de-

dedicate this small volume to you, as a public

acknowledgment of the candour and liberality

with which you inserted in your Journal*

these Parliamentary Sketches, though fre-

quently containing opinions contrary to your

own. This conduct did not surprise me, nor

did I ever think it necessary to apologize to

you for the expression of my sentiments. I

had known your turn of mind too well from

the earliest youth to offer you such an insult :

but at the same time I am glad that I have

* The Examiner.

11-8-60 Ogden Collection

been partly instrumental in showing to the Public, what I myself always knew, that the man, whom they perhaps looked upon as merely an ingenious politician conscientiously supporting his favourite opinions, has also a regard for the freedom of truth, superior to all considerations of self-love and self-interest. I should be proud to give my name at length, while I am thus proclaiming myself as enjoying your friendship: but on second thought I believe it will be better for me not to draw aside the mysterious veil which has given an importance to the assumed name of **CRITICUS.***

Yours very sincerely,

THE AUTHOR.

Inner Temple,
15th March, 1815.

* The signature assumed in the Examiner.

TO
THE READER.

THESE articles have appeared in the Examiner at different times during the last year and a half: they will be found sometimes to contain allusions to temporary matters now almost forgot. The Author could not well cure this defect without re-casting the characters: but this he declined to do, as the volume would then have had an air of pretension, from which, if it is considered, as it is intended, as merely a series of hasty sketches, it will be entirely free.

THE READER.

These articles have appeared in the
Examiner of London since during the
last year and a half. They will be found
sometimes to contain allusions to former
points mentioned almost forgot. The
Author could not well omit this defect
without causing the objection; but this
he deemed to do, as the volume would
then have had an air of pretension, and
which it is considered as it is in reality
merely a series of papers, and which
will be entirely free.

CONTENTS.

	Page
Introduction	1
Lord Castlereagh	11
Mr. Ponsonby	22
Mr. Vansittart and Mr. Fitzgerald	34
Mr. C. W. Wynne and Mr. Bankes	43
Mr. Tierney	55
Mr. W. Smith and Mr. Wilberforce	65
Sir W. Garrow and Sir S. Romilly	75
Mr. Canning	88
Mr. B. Bathurst and Mr. Ryder	99
Mr. Grattan	108
Mr. W. Pole and Mr. Croker	118
Lord Milton and Lord Morpeth	128
Mr. Creevey and Mr. Brand	137
The City Members	146
Sir William Scott	154
Dr. Duigenan and General Montagu Mathew ..	165
Mr. Robinson and Mr. Peel	173
Mr. Rose	181
Mr. Yorke and Mr. Stephen	189
Sir John Newport and Sir H. Parnell	195
Sir Francis Burdett	202
Mr. Huskisson and Mr. Horner	210
The Speaker of the House of Commons	217
Mr. Whitbread ,	225

CONTENTS

1	Introduction
11	Local Government
22	Mr. [Name] and the [Name]
34	Mr. [Name] and the [Name]
45	Mr. [Name] and the [Name]
56	Mr. [Name] and the [Name]
67	Mr. [Name] and the [Name]
78	Mr. [Name] and the [Name]
89	Mr. [Name] and the [Name]
100	Mr. [Name] and the [Name]
111	Mr. [Name] and the [Name]
122	Mr. [Name] and the [Name]
133	Mr. [Name] and the [Name]
144	Mr. [Name] and the [Name]
155	Mr. [Name] and the [Name]
166	Mr. [Name] and the [Name]
177	Mr. [Name] and the [Name]
188	Mr. [Name] and the [Name]
199	Mr. [Name] and the [Name]
210	Mr. [Name] and the [Name]
221	Mr. [Name] and the [Name]
232	Mr. [Name] and the [Name]
243	Mr. [Name] and the [Name]
254	Mr. [Name] and the [Name]
265	Mr. [Name] and the [Name]
276	Mr. [Name] and the [Name]
287	Mr. [Name] and the [Name]
298	Mr. [Name] and the [Name]
309	Mr. [Name] and the [Name]
320	Mr. [Name] and the [Name]
331	Mr. [Name] and the [Name]
342	Mr. [Name] and the [Name]
353	Mr. [Name] and the [Name]
364	Mr. [Name] and the [Name]
375	Mr. [Name] and the [Name]
386	Mr. [Name] and the [Name]
397	Mr. [Name] and the [Name]
408	Mr. [Name] and the [Name]
419	Mr. [Name] and the [Name]
430	Mr. [Name] and the [Name]
441	Mr. [Name] and the [Name]
452	Mr. [Name] and the [Name]
463	Mr. [Name] and the [Name]
474	Mr. [Name] and the [Name]
485	Mr. [Name] and the [Name]
496	Mr. [Name] and the [Name]
507	Mr. [Name] and the [Name]
518	Mr. [Name] and the [Name]
529	Mr. [Name] and the [Name]
540	Mr. [Name] and the [Name]
551	Mr. [Name] and the [Name]
562	Mr. [Name] and the [Name]
573	Mr. [Name] and the [Name]
584	Mr. [Name] and the [Name]
595	Mr. [Name] and the [Name]
606	Mr. [Name] and the [Name]
617	Mr. [Name] and the [Name]
628	Mr. [Name] and the [Name]
639	Mr. [Name] and the [Name]
650	Mr. [Name] and the [Name]
661	Mr. [Name] and the [Name]
672	Mr. [Name] and the [Name]
683	Mr. [Name] and the [Name]
694	Mr. [Name] and the [Name]
705	Mr. [Name] and the [Name]
716	Mr. [Name] and the [Name]
727	Mr. [Name] and the [Name]
738	Mr. [Name] and the [Name]
749	Mr. [Name] and the [Name]
760	Mr. [Name] and the [Name]
771	Mr. [Name] and the [Name]
782	Mr. [Name] and the [Name]
793	Mr. [Name] and the [Name]
804	Mr. [Name] and the [Name]
815	Mr. [Name] and the [Name]
826	Mr. [Name] and the [Name]
837	Mr. [Name] and the [Name]
848	Mr. [Name] and the [Name]
859	Mr. [Name] and the [Name]
870	Mr. [Name] and the [Name]
881	Mr. [Name] and the [Name]
892	Mr. [Name] and the [Name]

PARLIAMENTARY PORTRAITS,

INTRODUCTION.

IT cannot be a speculation unacceptable to those who feel an interest in the transactions of Parliament, and who does not? to review the ranks of our political leaders; and, while they pass before us, to criticise their pretensions to eminence either for their wisdom, their eloquence, or their integrity. It is not my purpose to examine at large the various questions which occupy the attention of our legislative assemblies; I have neither the leisure nor the presumption to undertake so portentous an enterprize: besides, there are other and abler pens which are constantly dedicated to this difficult and useful service, and I am not anxious to begin a competition on an arena where I should certainly not be able to carry off the first honours. Some instruction however, some entertainment at

any rate, may result from the contemplation of the principal persons who figure on the great scene : as it is curious to investigate minutely the individual members of a large machine, though the consideration of their combined effect is without doubt the more exalted and more pleasing study.

In turning our thoughts to the composition and proceedings of a great popular assembly, all whose transactions appear at least to be conducted through the medium of speech, it is impossible not to be struck with the dearth of dexterity and excellence in the management of the chief instrument of its operations. What should we say of the main army of a military nation which had not attained common precision in the use of fire-arms ; or, to descend lower, of a company of watchmen, who, like *Dogberry's* followers, should think " it belongs to a watch to sleep." Something to this effect, however, may be predicated of the conclave who meet at Westminster to talk for the public good. The spirit of our constitution directs, and its ostensible practice complies with that direction, that all public measures shall be proposed and canvassed in the representative council of the people,

and shall be approved or rejected on their demonstrated merits or defects. Subjects of almost incalculable interest are to be discussed: peace and war, laws, morals, manufactures, commerce, all that concerns the wealth, the happiness, the glory of nations. Can the imagination conceive a finer field for oratorical emulation; more powerful incentives to awaken the mind to develope all its energies and all its graces through its noble organ, the tongue? What is the fact? About half a dozen speakers, who have acquired a certain fluent mediocrity, are allowed to settle the disputed proposition with little knowledge and less spirit, whilst the rest remain idle and almost unconcerned hearers, sometimes yawning, sometimes sleeping, and sometimes, to evince perhaps their claims to sit in a speaking assembly, shouting in a style to be envied only by a Stentor or a whipper-in. It is indeed matter of humiliating reflection that, in a country like England, whose philosophers, and poets, and artists, may go side by side with the proudest names of antiquity—whose wealth and power make Greece dwindle into insignificance, and might dispute the precedence even with the gigantic despotism of Im-

perial Rome ; in a country too, blest with a popular congress, where the voices of the chiefs of the nation may be heard, that scarcely one man has arisen who deserves the title of orator ; scarcely one, who like Cicero, by the mere power of words, has darted the public indignation against a state delinquent, or like Demosthenes has electrified a whole people with one universal impulse of patriotism. From the earliest period of a free senate to the present day, scarcely one such name appears on our historical records : great political names indeed are to be found, which might distinguish the annals of any country, our Wentworths and Hydes, our Harleys and St. Johns, our Walpoles and Pulteneys, our Pitts and Foxes : but would any man in his senses think of comparing these eminent persons, I mean simply as orators, with those mighty orators of Greece and Rome. I have heard (and I dare say that at one time it was a common topic) the first Lord Chatham mentioned as superior to them both. The noble absence of selfishness, the unimpeachable integrity, the strait-forward manliness of thinking, and the ardent intrepid spirit of that illustrious Minister, are beyond my feeble

praise, and for their sake I am proud that "Chatham's language was my mother tongue." But I cannot consent to that insulting mockery which would place on his head a crown which does not belong to him : to invest him with splendours which only discover his real insignificance. Certainly it is not easy to read unmoved the glowing invective, the terrific denunciations which he pours out against the supporters of a weak and pernicious system, and I have no doubt that, when accompanied with his mighty voice and eye of fire, they appalled and almost annihilated his unequal and puny antagonists. But to an impartial observer of the present day, do they contain any specimen of that energetic reasoning and vehement passion, that stupendous intellect chastised by the correctest taste, those inimitable graces and sublimities of manner and language—in short, that combination of the mightiest means wielded by the mightiest power which astonish and overwhelm us in the rival of *Æschines* and adversary of Philip. Are they characterised by that union of profound erudition, of extensive and philosophic observation of men and manners, as well as of those

most exquisite artifices of elaborate rhetoric, which mark the first name in Roman history—him who at once improved the taste, enlarged the thinking, and saved the liberties of his country—the more than Bacon of his day in various learning and comprehensive intellect, the more than Sidney in his fearless and powerful assertion of national independence against the encroachment of a profligate tyrant.* Compare (as one instance) the best speech of Lord Chatham on the American war with the famous vindication which the Athenian has left against his enemies: then say if the half-educated, half-informed understanding, and even tasteless puerilities of the Englishman are to be put in competition with the sublime harmony of thought and diction which distinguish the Greek. One glorious name indeed remains, which for scope of thought, for extent of knowledge, for wisdom almost more than human, may rank even with Demosthenes or Cicero; but then Burke disgraces his page with the most revolting inequalities, and his best efforts are certainly not his speeches.

It would require a long dissertation to in-

* Antony.

investigate the cause of this oratorical inferiority of our countrymen. Some have foolishly ascribed it to the good sense of our nation, which despises those meretricious ornaments (as they phrase it) which oratory throws over the fair form of truth; as if Pericles and Demosthenes, Cæsar and Cicero, had not as much good sense as Lords Liverpool and Castlereagh. A better reason may perhaps be found in the constitution of that Assembly, which only assumes the character of being popular; and, while it pretends to regulate its decisions by deliberative wisdom, in fact listens only to the voice of power. In such a meeting, however grand the matter of debate, there is little stimulus for any but the most enterprising mind to waste its powers on a predetermined audience: for what could the voice of an angel do against a silent vote bought in silence. These purchased decisions, these previously bargained securities against the possible effects of eloquence, are sufficient to extirpate all the motives for exertion in the common run of ambitious men. Even a man, whose love of fame is purified from mere selfishness, may be forgiven, if he hesitates a little before he will devote the

whole faculties of his mind to astonish an audience, who are bound by honour or by covenant not to be convinced, though Demosthenes should rise from the dead ; and to whom is left merely the half-animal capacity of receiving pleasure from the sound of well harmonized periods. It asks a mind of no common firmness, of no common benevolence, to persevere in haranguing an impenetrable assembly from the almost baseless hope that some better spirit may disenthral itself from its ignoble bondage, and dare to act solely at the direction of virtue and intelligence. There are however (thank Heaven) among us at present two or three eminent characters, who seem actuated by this stimulus of a generous utility ; and who find their reward not indeed in the intoxicating acclamations of popular unanimity, enforced by their eloquence, but in the slow yet regulated benefits which in spite of every obstacle flow from their speeches, to the amelioration of every part of a reluctant, but conscience-struck Administration. Bad therefore as the prospect may appear to a young orator, let him not despair : he cannot command a majority of votes, but he can command a majority

of the Reasoning and the Good throughout the Country, and through them the ultimate control over the proudest and most corrupt Minister.—But this tempting subject is carrying me beyond all reasonable limits; I will therefore, without farther preface, proceed to the critical exhibition of our several Parliamentary Leaders, and weigh, in the most impartial balance which my judgment can frame, their talents and their conduct, chiefly, however, with reference to their skill and influence as Parliamentary Speakers.

The first of these is the fact that the
 Government has been unable to secure
 the necessary funds to carry out its
 policy of non-interference in the
 internal affairs of the Republic.
 The second is the fact that the
 Government has been unable to secure
 the necessary funds to carry out its
 policy of non-interference in the
 internal affairs of the Republic.
 The third is the fact that the
 Government has been unable to secure
 the necessary funds to carry out its
 policy of non-interference in the
 internal affairs of the Republic.

LORD CASTLEREAGH.

I AM aware that the task which I have undertaken is one of considerable delicacy, and even peril : to cite before a self-created tribunal all the leading rank, and power, and talent of the day,—to call them to strict account, and pass upon them an unhesitating sentence of censure or of praise,—may appear a vast reach of presumption in an unknown individual : while, at the same time, the risk of failure amounts almost to certainty, and failure brings with it a storm of indignation and contempt. The usefulness as well as interest of the investigation can alone justify the boldness of the attempt, and would alone console the ignominy of ill success : conscious, meantime, as the author is (in the language of his motto) that his opinions are honestly formed, and that malice is out of the question, where he is discussing a great diversity of characters with whom he never was, and very probably never will be, connected.

In the exhibition of my gallery of portraits, I shall begin with the Members of the Lower rather than of the Upper House, because, rapid as are the strides which our Government is taking towards mere monarchy,—and even Mr. Leckie could hardly wish to accelerate its velocity, yet there remains to the Commons some show of will, some spark of legislative interference, which gives them a decided superiority over the acquiescing aristocracy, who slumber in scattered array on the crimson benches of their gaudier chamber. The House of Lords has been called, not inaptly, an Hospital of Invalids. The House of Commons presents the more imposing spectacle of an army of strong men, though, to a close observer, the heroes will appear fettered with all the graduated varieties of subordination, and acting only as the master-influence directs: serving by the way as an useful illustration to those puzzling and puzzled metaphysicians, who have insisted on the inseparable union between free-will and necessity.

I shall not marshal my phantoms according to their merit, so much as according to their rank: the Commoner who is the Minister of

the day is always considered as the Manager* of the House of Commons, and seems on that account alone worthy of our first notice ; and, indeed, less curious persons must at once imagine him to be the most eloquent as well as the most powerful Member, whose speeches never fail to carry conviction to such large majorities. The present Administration, besides the various satellites which move about the large bodies, and are, by the way, much more luminous than their unwieldy principals, has sent three of its greater stars to illuminate the nether hemisphere: two of these, unfortunately, happen to be opaque bodies, while the third casts such faint glimmerings of light as would appear darkness to any but those who had been used for some time to the atmosphere of Greenland.

To descend, however, from these celestial metaphors, which, indeed, have no very obvious connexion with our very terrestrial governors,—it is rather new for a Ministry to have but one advocate of its measures in the House of Commons,—only one man to fight

* I use this term because it is familiar to every body, though the very sound of it portends all that is impudent and unconstitutional.

the pitched battles with the armies of Whiggism, or to ward off the desultory attacks from the adventurous marauders who start up occasionally from all quarters of the House, and fire their little volleys just loud and teasing enough to make their silence worthy to be purchased. Even in the autocratic reign of Mr. Pitt, his attendant spirits were allowed now and then to exert their small energies, and the voices of Lord Hawkesbury, Mr. Hobart, and Mr. Dundas, resounded during many an hour, through all the gradations of official explanation and recrimination. Poor Addington, indeed, who most wanted assistance, had nothing to support him, except the stiff nonentity of his brother Hiley, and the prattling dulness of his brother Bathurst, that illustrious pair, whose very appearance begets *ennui*, and has distended more faces into a yawn than ever Sheridan wrinkled into smiles. Mr. Perceval condescended to adopt the barking aid of Mr. Yorke, though we must say that he seemed to approve his thundering cheers much more than his broken-limbed speeches. But Lord Castlereagh is the universal and unsupported defender of every Ministerial project: even Mr. Vansittart's patent scheme of finance

hung lingering between life and death, its parent being unable to utter one intelligible sentence against the fierce and persevering denunciations of Mr. Tierney, till Lord Castlereagh brought a long speech to its support, and carried it through, amid the acclamations of those who could not speak one word in its favour. Whatever, indeed, be the subject, up starts Lord Castlereagh, a sort of Pericles in miniature, and develops his tedious thread of ideas in a speech seldom less than of two hours length : for his Lordship seems to have an opinion similar to the Pharisees, that he shall be heard for his much talking. Well, —but somebody will perhaps interrupt,—his Lordship must be a prodigious man who can talk on every thing and for so long a time. This faculty is undoubtedly curiously peculiar, but, I apprehend, not miraculous. It may be thus explained : His ideas are few and puny, but his words, the symbols or phantoms of his ideas, are extended to a supernatural expansion, so that the signifier and the thing signified bear the same proportion which one sometimes observes between a small heavy stone and its alarming shadow, elongated to the distance of many a rood.

It is peculiar also to Lord Castlereagh to

be heard with much apparent respect, and even fondness, though the style of his harangues is decidedly the dullest in the Lower House. He has no imagination, no energy either of thought or language, no spirit in his manner; and though he is perpetually aiming at uncommon words and forms of expression, yet I never remember him to have struck out one happy combination. His involutions of sentences have been much ridiculed as rendering his meaning frequently inaccessible: and his adversaries and rivals have generally ascribed this obscurity to design, and call it a stratagem to escape from any open declaration of his sentiments, which might be in the way of future arrangements. I do not think so: I believe Lord Castlereagh to be sincere in most of his opinions, and more free from uncandid evasions than most of the political aspirants of the day: he has at least as much public integrity, and as strong claims to public confidence, as Mr. Ponsonby, and a vast deal more, I apprehend, than Mr. Canning. The perplexity of his diction I impute to that anxious laboriousness so common to a mind inquiring but not acute, whose ideas being indistinct and half-formed, can of course never produce clear

and perfect images, but which, being eager to communicate its notions, endeavours, by every artifice of variety, quantity, and length, to supply the place of simplicity and energy. It is like the variegated patch-work of a beggar's garment, where a thousand diversities of rags, however artfully placed, form but an ill substitute for a firm and uniform texture; or like an unwieldy levy-en-masse, instead of a compact, well-organized, and manageable army.—A more trifling peculiarity is that affected pronunciation with which he enervates the masculine sounds of our tongue; such for instance as calling “knowledge,” “*nullige*,” “Commons,” “*cummins*,” “discussion,” “*deskissin*,” and several others: this is so curious an exception to the usual plain dull common sense of Lord Castlereagh, that I can only account for it by supposing that Lady C., who is a lady of letters, may have some favourite theory of enunciation, intended to supersede Sheridan's or Walker's, and that she has engaged her noble husband to try its efficacy and power of pleasing in the first assembly of the nation. One puerile affectation may be forgiven him, because it seems to arouse all his energies, and really

stirs him into a sort of warmth: a military subject is to him what Galvanism is to a dead frog: he jumps about with symptoms of life, which might deceive a common observer, till, on looking for the animating soul, you find that all these exertions were merely accidental. Whence this military propensity proceeds, I cannot tell: his father was a Colonel of Volunteers, and himself commands a regiment of Militia; but this is the case with a score or two other Members of the House. It can hardly arise from his looking well in the military dress, though he is fond of appearing in it; for he must know that he looks the accomplished gentleman in any garb. Indeed this is the favourable side of Lord Castlereagh: his handsome person, his intelligent and well-defined countenance, his conciliatory tone, his graceful manners, his mildness, urbanity, and invincible courtesy, ensure him popularity and even fondness from the House of Commons, in spite of his dulness and in spite of his political errors. Personal and even political animosity loses daily some of its rancour, from the influence of that gentleness which never irritates, and is as slow to be irritated; whose polish makes

the sharpest arrow, which anger can shoot, glide from him harmless, and whose softness neutralizes the most acrid venom. Thus, though he is utterly deficient in the marks of the real English character, and is as little like his native Irish,—though he has no honest indiscretions, no bursts of feeling, no fearless unhesitating avowals, at once imprudent and noble,—yet he is perhaps the greatest favourite, since the time of Lord North, in an assembly consisting four-fifths of Englishmen. Mr. Perceval was liked, and deservedly, as an amiable gentleman, but then he fancied himself a wit, and he really had some power of sarcasm. With this dangerous talent often has he roused the sleeping Whigs into all the rancour of party-rage at the end of a long debate, which had been for hours conducted with the prevailing apathy of the day. Thus he had almost as many political enemies as Mr. Pitt, though he was as gentle as the other was haughty and unaccommodating. Lord Castlereagh has no wit, nor power of satire; and he is too prudent or too good-natured to show the wish to strike without the energy sufficient to make the blow effectual.

It is impossible to close a character of Lord

Castlereagh even as a speaker, (and this sketch pretends to nothing else,) without alluding to the universal hatred with which the majority of Irishmen pursue his name. All the atrocities of the late Rebellion are attributed to him, though he had scarcely any concern in them : the abominous dulness of Lord Camden, and the brainless impetuosities of General Lake, are game too mean for the Irish politicians :—they overlook at once “ *et adipem Cassii, et Cethegi furiosam temeritatem ;*” but all the fierceness of party, all the popular fury, is to be turned against that man, whose abilities and industry made him a formidable rival to his political opponents, and whose amiable character must have been irresistibly victorious, unless stained with charges of cruelty and tyranny. But it is not my office to enlarge on such subjects, and I gladly turn away my eyes from those frightful scenes of national suffering, where both sides seem madly to have rushed to mutual destruction, with all the savageness and all the hatred of the blindest terror. It is a subject too early for discussion by a century, and Irishmen should not be eager to provoke a review, where faults will be seen to attach to their

friends as well as their enemies. In the language of an eloquent sufferer* in those dreadful days, "let that event and its name rest in obscurity and peace till other times and other men can do justice to its character."

* Emmet's speech: he uses those expressions with reference to himself, but they may as well be applied to the tragedy in which he was one of the principal actors.

MR. PONSONBY.

I AM no friend to political creeds or party-badges, for besides the servility of putting on a livery, it is a ridiculous presumption in any set of men to pretend to the exclusive possession of all that is enlightened or honest, and to denounce every man as weak or corrupt who does not choose to be enclosed within their best of possible pales. I do not deny the use of parties in a Government so constituted as that of England, though, except for the purposes of personal aggrandizement, I doubt whether the thickest phalanx which was ever marshalled against a Ministry would produce one half of that solid benefit to the country which may result from the sensible speech of an independent, unsupported member. The great disadvantage of a systematic opposition is its necessity of attacking every project of the existing Administration, whether good or bad, so that twice out of four times it must almost necessarily be wrong :

for I suppose it is presumable, on every principle of common sense and human conduct, that no Ministry will be gratuitously wicked, that on the contrary they will act rightly if they can, and on a combination of the doctrine of chances with the usual rules of action, one may conclude that it is quite as probable that the Prime Minister will endeavour to act well as ill. All this is perfectly known to the Opposition : but then they are a great body with a vast number of hungry retainers, and they must fight for place and forage ; and as the laws of war are not remarkable for the niceness of their morality, it is of little consequence whether they attack an offending or an innocent territory. This sort of petty warfare of course destroys the respectability of the body using it, and its public usefulness must decrease in the same ratio as the public confidence.

With this view of party-objects, it is not likely that I should be very anxious to enlist myself under any particular banner : still when a person has undertaken to canvass the conduct of political men, it seems quite natural to inquire into his individual opinions, whether he be Tory, Whig, or Reformer. With the best attention which I have been able to

give to the Constitution of my country, and at least an earnest examination of the causes of its grandeur and strength, I profess myself an ardent admirer of the principles of Whiggism: in other words, I venerate that wise maxim which, referring the origin of all power to the people, allows only such an exercise of the delegated authority as shall contribute to the general weal, and which, looking upon princes and governors only as persons ennobled by the sublime importance of their functions, frowns with indignation on the courtly flattery which would make a nation's welfare subservient to a private opinion. But though I love Whiggism, I cannot extend this feeling to its professors: for the Whigs themselves I feel the most violent distaste, whether they be of modern or ancient date: I am equally disgusted with the turbulent profligacy of Lord Shaftesbury, the elegant cowardice of Lord Somers, the sordid dishonesty of Mr. Pulteney, and the inaccessible pride of Lord Grey.* One name indeed the Whigs may

* It is not my intention to invade the sanctuary of private life; but in justice to Lord Grey I must say, that he is reported to be as gentle and good-natured in private life, as in public he is stiff, arrogant, and supercilious.

boast, their glory, and the glory of his country, the gentlest, the firmest, and the honestest of human beings, whose heart more than any man's seems to have been purged from all hateful and malignant passions, and to have opened itself with equal zeal to private friendship and the public good. Mr. Fox, after the first indiscretions of his youth, never lost sight of the great principles of his profession, and his frank simplicity of manners formed a beautiful concord with the popular tendencies of his political conduct. But let not this illustrious name be confounded with those dull and pompous Aristocrats, who, assuming a popular title for private purposes, despise equally popular feelings and popular sentiments; who bolstered up with heaps of wealth, and stiffened into one compact mass by family alliance, with cold selfishness turn their backs at once on the Monarch and the nation, and never think or speak of the people, except perhaps once a Session to point a sentence, or build a climax. Are such men constitutional advocates of a people's rights? are they even a healthy part of the body politic of England? No! they are indolent and indurated tumours, equally

dangerous by their stay or their removal, but which it is the interest both of the King and People to soften or disperse as much as possible by their united skill and energy. They are the powerful obstacle in the way of all reform, yet dare to retain a name which throws shame and inconsistency on all their actions and all their sentiments. Let me except one eminent character "who bears no token of these sable streams," though sometimes ingulfed in their general vortex. For Lord Holland it is impossible not to feel the deepest respect: his open disposition and honest feelings remind one every moment of his great relative; while his fine good sense, enlarged and liberalized into philosophy, shows that if his talents are not so prodigious as those of his uncle, they are at least of the same sterling nature.

But I must beg pardon for keeping Mr. Ponsonby so long in waiting: his rank, as leader of the Whig Opposition, suggested these remarks, and must excuse my delay in bringing forward for public view so conspicuous a personage.

It is a novel and not very pleasant feature in the Whig-regiment, that its leader is an

Irishman : genius and worth are indeed of all countries ; and what Englishman would not be proud to be directed by Burke, or Sheridan, or Grattan, as far as intellect is concerned ? I am, however, yet to learn, and the nation has yet to learn, what are the intellectual pretensions of Mr. Ponsonby, whence it is that no Englishman can be found, of at least equal abilities, to fill the usual post, and why, *cæteris paribus*, a heavy Irish lawyer, but newly acquainted here, is to be selected by preference for that place, which, from various circumstances, seems to demand a man bred up in English habits, and thoroughly acquainted with English manners and customs. The reason seems to be his close connexion with most of the great aristocratical families, or what perhaps is of still more consequence, that the Whigs who are pledged to him do not know what else to do with him. Certainly a worse leader could not have been chosen : a man who fills that important situation should have extensive knowledge, commanding eloquence, perpetual vigilance, and last, though not the most trifling qualification, pleasing and conciliating manners. Let us examine Mr. Ponsonby by this standard. It

is said that he was an excellent Chancellor, which implies that he has considerable erudition in his profession ; and though a vain and selfish Englishman is apt to laugh when you talk of lawyers out of England, yet the law must be allowed to be a well-cultivated science in a country which has produced such men as Plunkett, Saurin, and Burroughs. I will suppose, therefore, that Mr. Ponsonby is a learned lawyer, though with a curious sort of courtesy the phrase of "Learned Gentleman," which usually is given to legal members, is dropped with reference to him. Is he ashamed of his business, or would the title which is borne by Sir Samuel Romilly disgrace Mr. George Ponsonby? Be this as it may, the knowledge of law seems almost the only knowledge possessed by this gentleman. He does not speak very often, but in all the speeches which I have heard, I cannot recollect any happy historical applications ; any illustrations from those arts or sciences which ought to be to a certain extent familiar to every gentleman's mind ; no allusions borrowed from the sublime fictions of poetry, at once to embellish and strengthen the cause of truth. All this, and tenfold more than

this, were found in Mr. Fox; and some of this may of right be expected from any person who puts himself forward as the intellectual leader of a band of well-educated gentlemen. Has he any eloquence? This question may best be answered by saying that he is never animated: nothing seems to rouse him except personal pique, and then he is warm without spirit, like the sullen, uncomfortable heat before a thunder-storm. Subjects of the deepest interest, occasions which electrify men of the usual feelings, are all met by him with the same dull measured offerings of a scanty understanding. Thus he is the coldest debater of the Catholic Claims among the Irish Members, and even at the dinner given to the Catholic Delegates, where the social glow of honestly-indulged feelings seemed to elevate every mind for a time into a moral enthusiasm, Mr. Ponsonby uttered a few trite dogmas in his usual *bow-wow* way, neither his thoughts being raised nor his feelings warmed by the noble spectacle around him. What, however, most unfits this statesman for his imposing situation is his habitual and apparently incurable indolence. A person who goes into the House of Commons

for the first time must be rather puzzled with his appearance. He sees a stout and rather ungainly Gentleman, not remarkably well dressed, with dirty boots and old unbrushed hat, sitting cross-legged, and his head almost sunk in his breast, as if asleep after the fatigues of a fox-chase. The sleepy personage then doffs his hat and rises; his unpolished manner and grim features hold forth but little promise: with the aid of jumping, and violent jerking of his head, which like the cadence of a mallet, which it imitates, seems a most appropriate exemplification of a knock-down argument, he gives utterance to about a score of sentences. The stranger expresses some surprise, and exclaims, "Why really that Country Gentleman says some sensible things: but pray, Sir, don't you think his manner not exactly the thing in a polished assembly?" What then is his astonishment when he learns that the person of whom he is speaking so disrespectfully is the chief of the aristocratical faction, and considered as the fittest person to conciliate and preserve the confidence of the people. What would be his astonishment if he should attend every day for a Session, and should observe that

this leader of a party could not prevail upon himself to rise a dozen times during the whole season ; that questions of vast importance were suffered to pass without one single observation ; that when Mr. Whitbread brought forward his motion on the American war, neither the Whigs nor their leader were to be seen at their post ; that when the cause of an injured Princess occupied the thoughts and feelings of a whole nation, Mr. Ponsonby had nothing to remark except a few words in defence of his political friends ; and lastly, when the Parliament was legislating for the interests of an almost boundless empire, Mr. Ponsonby, after one or two puny efforts in a subject which he allows to be of incalculable importance, steals away to the other side of the Channel, to follow fox-hounds in his county of Kildare. After this, it will seem mere anticlimax to state that there is nothing prepossessing in his appearance, or conciliatory in his manners, nothing to please the eye or soothe the senses, in the absence of those greater qualities which command conviction and enforce regard. After all, I am not so foolish as to imagine or to wish that I could

convince any person that Mr. Ponsonby has no claims to respect. He is a sensible, clear-headed man, with too much prudence to incur ridicule by any attempts beyond his powers; but except on the score of family, he is no more fitted for his post than the lowest retainer of his party. Some persons think he has humour: he certainly has some skill in sarcasm; but then he exercises it on the paltry satellites, instead of bravely attacking the chiefs of the party. The official fidgetiness, self-importance, and small-shotted anger of Mr. W. Pole were fair game, but why should the Right Honourable Leader of the Whigs waste his ammunition on such mean opponents as Messrs. Croker and Courtney? It was not so that Mr. Fox consulted the dignity of his character. But enough, and more than enough, has been said of a man, about whom the public feels as little curiosity as about his footman. Mr. Ponsonby is said to be fond of fox-hunting, and to have regretted the day when he left that intellectual amusement for politics: let him go back to it—he will not be missed: if he kills but one fox in a season he will do more service to the com-

mon weal, than by whole years of stiff, reluctant, lazy sitting on a bench, which was once adorned by Fox, and which, since Mr. Whitbread will not take it, hoping to be more useful in another capacity, may yet be filled by Brougham.

MR. VANSITTART AND MR. FITZGERALD.

ANY person who should merely read the names at the head of this article without referring to the official duties of the persons so denominated, might imagine that I had selected them for the sake of a ludicrous contrast, to relieve the offensive bluster of the young Irishman by the insipid tranquillity of the elderly Englishman. Certainly it is hardly possible to bring under one view two persons more dissimilar: if there is any difference between sedate intelligence and bubbling shallowness, between unpretending mildness and impertinent irritability, between modesty self-humiliating almost to a degree of debasement, and conceit soaring to the height of insolence, then there is an interval wide as the poles asunder between the two gentlemen whom I now undertake to exhibit. They are presented in one picture, merely because they hold similar situations, the one being Chancellor of the Exchequer for England, the other for Ireland. Those persons who think

that the same quantity of talent and knowledge is requisite for the appropriate discharge of the same duty, must be a little amused to see the patriarch of the present generation of financiers sitting side by side under the same official laurels which shade the youngster who, very probably, scarcely knows the distinction between simple and compound interest. It is pretty well known that the business of the Exchequer does not require the utmost reach of the human intellect. Mr. Sheridan once declared that a competent knowledge of the rule of three was a sufficient qualification for that important department. This, however, was merely the dictum of a man of genius, to whom all things are easy, and who is apt to undervalue any feats which may be achieved by mere perseverance and common sense. If an intimate acquaintance with the rule of three were all that were necessary from the chief of the budget-division of the Treasury, then the present officer in England might fairly be considered as the prince of political arithmeticians. His knowledge of figures is so profound, that I question if he would not be able to discover a new method of extracting

the cube, if he would devote himself to supply that long-sought desideratum instead of constructing pigmy fabrics of patent finance. In fact, he is such a master of figures, that like most conquerors of a hard-earned territory, he has changed the very nature of his acquired province: thus in his hands the rule of three has long ceased to be golden, and he has lately projected to increase the velocity* of an infinite series by clipping its wings and forcing it to stand still. Yet though I thus venture to laugh at the airy attempts of a projector, I should ill explain myself if I did not express the highest respect for Mr. Vansittart. He is certainly the most learned man in the financial profession, which the House of Commons can boast. Mr. Huskisson always bows with due respect to his old teacher, and even Mr. Tierney drops some of his cool sarcasm, and speaks with apparent or real respect (for it is not easy to discover when Mr. Tierney is in earnest) when he is combating the measures of a man who is able to detect all his fallacies, and unravel all his labyrinths of ciphers. But having paid this tribute of re-

* See his late scheme for appropriating part of the Sinking Fund.

spect to the first financier of the day (for such with all his whims, and in spite of all the ill-timed dogmas of the Bullion Committee, Mr. Vansittart assuredly is) I should be rather weak than candid if I should say any thing else to elevate this gentleman. His intellect, independently of his technical science, is so scanty and so ill-furnished with materials, that he cannot command the most obvious illustrations, or the most accessible varieties of diction in support of any the most darling measure. Born to admire whatever is, it is only in the unsubstantial region of ciphers that he is an innovator: in all things else he is as irremovable from the ground in which he has grown as the merest weed that ever encumbered a soil: parsley and horse-radish are but a type of his uneradicable tenacity. He loves the Government, and so he would if it had been a despotism as by law established under that best of monarchs James the Second: he loves Christianity, and so he would if Pope Gregory still swayed the holy sceptre: he loves the administration of affairs as now regulated, and so he would if by some incredible reverse

of fortune the Reformers should chance to perch on the Treasury benches: Do I mean to accuse him of dishonesty or insincerity? From my soul I disavow so calumnious an imputation: I believe him to be an highly honourable and disinterested man: but I think him to be one of those feeble unenlightened understandings that dare not open their eyes to a light which they fear will be too strong for them, but are content to connive and wink so long as they themselves can tread along in security and peace.

It is to indolence, to timidity, to an imbecility which shrinks from the task of combating prejudice: it is to these causes, and not to mean selfishness, that I attribute the time-serving conduct of this and some other gentlemen. For the rest, his public character may be dismissed in two words: on the one part, his utter inability to connect together half a dozen intelligible sentences would detract all respect from his addresses; but, on the other hand, his well known integrity, his primitive simplicity of manner, (for he looks as honestly prepossessing as the white hairs and unworldly-gentleness of the

most saintly priest,) and above all, his perpetual good nature, alway secure him a patient and even half-affectionate attention.

The Irish Chancellor is so testy a gentleman, that a very timid and superficial observer might be afraid to meddle with him; those however who view him closely are rather amused than alarmed by his gun-powder speeches, and sword and pistol aspect, and think they see that he has no more effectual fire in him than a paltry squib, which spirts out its fretful anger to the danger only of the hand that wields it. This young gentleman may be looked upon as one of the spoiled children of the House of Commons: an assembly indeed, which, on all occasions, shows a most unwise good-nature towards the efforts of its younger members. I call it unwise, because it tempts many a half-informed stripling to waste its sacred hours with crude conceits, against which there afterwards lies no remedy except by the rude operation of coughing or hooting down. Mr. Fitzgerald, however, after being heard often enough to make him believe himself of some importance, has at length reached that pitch that no cough or hooting can silence him. He puts on a big

face, and "threatens the threatener:" when the cry against him is loudest, (for the House begin to be tired of him,) instead of yielding quietly to the storm, he looks about him to single out some victim whom he may denounce for want of courtesy: and with the true spirit of unchivalrous valour he is sure to pitch either on some quiet country gentleman, or some humble friend at the corners of the Treasury bench. He has, indeed, all the absurd susceptibility of a person who, conscious of his own weak and ridiculous points, fancies that every body sees them as well as himself, and forgets that there is a graduation in the scale of insignificance below which the most active and malicious vigilance holds it worthless to direct its attention. Let me reassure him; whatever notice has been bestowed upon him is to be ascribed to the kindness of the House, to his family connexions, and perhaps a little to his exceedingly well-cut though strangely coloured coat and pantaloons. As to any thing else, he may be confident that he may be as silly and as pompous as he pleases, and that no one will heed it except perhaps now and then to divert the spleen. Sir John Newport may in-

deed sometimes condescend to ejaculate a few fiery sentences about Irish distilleries and Irish excise; but Mr. Fitzgerald must not mistake this opposition as a personal attention. He should recollect that Sir John talks partly because he is very fond of talking, and partly because, having once been Chancellor himself, he abides by the good old rule of disliking every thing done by every other possible Chancellor. I cannot explain whence it arises, but it seems peculiar to Irish Chancellors and Irish Secretaries to imagine themselves to be the sole important and responsible personages in the Irish Government. Some of this feeling may be discovered in the Right Honourable Baronet just mentioned: a vast deal of it in the late officer Mr. W. Pole: and the mantle has lost none of its dignifying influencing by investing the shoulders of Messrs. Peel and Fitzgerald. Cannot these very humble under-agents understand that all which is expected from them is a clear and modest detail of their duties, and, when called for, a quiet explanation of the motives of their superiors? Yet to hear these persons talk, a stranger would imagine that in them was vested all the dignity and power of Irish

Administration, and that a Lord Lieutenant or a Commander in Chief were merely their acting constables. Lord Castlereagh, who seems to love humour though he has none, and whose calm good sense is abhorrent from all sort of pretence, may be frequently seen to smile at the ludicrous self-importance and boyish hastiness of the Irish financier : and not seldom appears to hint the propriety of silence to the bouncing orator, which however the youth in general disregards. I have however wasted too much time on this vain young gentleman, and shall conclude by advising him to study with a little more accuracy that noble rule of three (which, from Mr. Sheridan's notion, may be called the Chancellor's rule or touchstone) whence he may perhaps be able to discover more nicely than he knows at present, the proportion between his talents and the respect which belongs to them.

MR. C. W. WYNNE AND MR. BANKES.

I HAVE associated these gentlemen, not so much for any strong resemblance to each other in their individual qualities, as because they both, influenced no doubt by sufficiently powerful motives, but at any rate unembarrassed with the inconsistently uniform slavery of party, dare to maintain a tolerably independent aspect, and to avow sentiments which probably are entirely their own. It must not be imagined that I intended to designate these respectable persons as very stern patriots, as the Hampdens or Sidney's of their day—examples which, I suppose, they would no more think of following, than of devoting themselves, like Scævola or Curtius, or any other of those heroes, who, it is to be feared, are now admired chiefly by school-boys. Though nothing of this must be expected, yet the contemplation of two quiet characters may be some refreshment to those who are wearied, on the one side, with office, ever

bustling, prattling, and smirking, and, on the other, with opposition always ill-humoured, malignant, and pretending to be the sole proprietary of all the virtue and wisdom extant.

To begin with Mr. Wynne: it would in some respects be an advantage to this gentleman not to be heard, but only to be read: the soundness * and honesty * of his opinions excite a high respect for his person, which however may be diminished among superficial observers, when they witness his ungraceful and almost absurd delivery. His face, when he speaks, is as full of creases "as a wet cloak ill laid up:" it looks as if all the acids of nature had conspired to crisp its wrinkles. His voice is a child's treble, occasionally deepened, for the sake of dignity, into a sort of roar. The impression is quite ludicrous to those who do not know him: to those who do, it is painful, because they lament to observe very good sense not only weakened in its effect, but even rendered disagreeable, by the discordant tones † in which it is uttered.

* These words ought to be synonymous, but somehow it is usual to give them distinct significations, out of compliment perhaps to Machiavelians and men of the world.

† Mr. Wynne's brother, Sir. Watkin, is as remarkable

I should not have thought this defect, strange and striking as it is, worthy the least notice, except for the unaccountable circumstance, that Mr. Wynne himself seems utterly unaware of it, and holds himself out, in the most marked and obtrusive manner, as a candidate for the Speaker's chair,—a place for which an imposing voice seems at least as essential as the flowing wig. A call to "order" from him must be almost a signal to laugh: and on very disorderly occasions, when the Irish and Country Gentlemen, well warmed with Bellamy's* claret, begin, at five o'clock in the morning, to shout for the question, when chaos seems come again, and the House "scarce holds the wild uproar,"—when even the solemn importance and skilful precision of the present Speaker's tones are lost in the tumult;—at such a time what would become of Mr. Wynne's tiny articulations? Where a wolf might howl unheard, is a grasshopper likely to arrest the attention?—Having, however, stated this disqualifica-

for the grumbling, indistinct, smothered rumbling of his voice: the brothers are known in the House by the name of "Bubble and Squeak."

* The Coffee-house keeper of the House of Commons.

tion of Mr. Wynne for the object of his pursuit (and it appears to me not to be entirely unimportant), I will most cheerfully allow that in every other respect he is the fittest Member to succeed the present Chairman. To an acute and well-judging understanding, he adds a large portion of that peculiar knowledge which is necessary to direct the proceedings and decide the doubts of the House: there is a straight-forward integrity in his conduct, which is calculated to inspire the utmost confidence, and a liberality and justness of thinking which will be a security against the operation of petty alarms and imaginary dangers. This last is even a more useful quality in a President than honesty itself; for without an enlarged mind a mere good man must ever be at the mercy of the plausible cunning of others, or of his own short-sighted timidity. In this quality Mr. Wynne will have the advantage over the present Speaker, whose worthy intentions are unfortunately limited by the narrow range of his intellect. In other respects there are strong points of similarity about them: the same industry, the same learning, the same courtesy, the same desire to act right, and

the same unyielding steadiness to support the dignity and privileges of the House : in short, if ever this aspirant should come to the Chair, it will be found, that, in almost every thing except voice, " Charles the Second reigns like Charles the First." I have almost taken it for granted that Mr. Wynne will be successful in the object of his ambition, which he pursues with such continued ardour. Every word he utters seems directed to this end; he stands like a personification of Hatsell's Precedents; and from the oracular seat of his memory, shows how nothing is new in the House of Commons, except the impunity with which great delinquents insult the sacred face of justice. Besides, he does not seem likely to have a competitor, except perhaps in the person of Mr. Davies Giddy, who has a sort of shambling, slovenly knowledge of precedents, picked up in Committees above stairs: but, if the House have any self-respect, they will never prefer the shuffling indecision of such a character as Mr. Giddy, to the honest manliness of Mr. Wynne: who, indeed, on several occasions, has evinced a very noble firmness. To mention no other instances, one ought not to forget his efforts

to bring the Duke of Cumberland before the proper tribunal, when a timid Committee had shrunk from its duty: nor, what perhaps is better, his enlisting with the small but independent minority, which pronounced a verdict of Guilty on the Duke of York. Mr. Wynne might perhaps feel with Mr. Windham, and what every gentleman must feel, that he would rather have been the Duke than the accuser on that occasion, because human frailty is more pardonable than base, unmanly artifice: but he scorned to shelter himself under this fair-seeming plea, when he was called upon to declare his solemn sentiments on a question of fact. He knew what all should have known, that the infamy of the informer could weigh nothing against well-proved circumstances. This honest conduct alone deserves the Chair. I confess I have some partiality for this gentleman, who is a lawyer without the pedantry or servility of his profession; who, having proposed to himself a very honourable object of pursuit, disdains to farther his wishes by an obsequious accommodation to the views of party, or a politic reservation of even his boldest opinions.

I do not feel the same partiality for Mr.

Bankes, who is indeed rather a distasteful Gentleman. He belongs to a very distasteful party, being for general purposes a kind of leader of the Saints in the House of Commons. This holy band consists of somewhat more than a dozen persons of that description which is usually called Methodistical: but it is not my intention to quarrel with their religious opinions, towards which indeed, I feel some kindness; for after all, Religion should have some enthusiasm about it, and ought not to be chained down to the rules of *Cocker's Arithmetic*. It is their political conduct which I dislike: an affectation of candour which smiles equally on the opposing views of contending parties, though they may be as adverse as truth and falsehood: a perpetual oscillation between the right and the expedient, with at the same time the correctest notion of the abstract excellence of the one, and the humble hope that it may give way without injury, once at least, to the local propriety of the other. These traits, together with a whining, coxcomical parade about pure motives, perfect disinterestedness, and the general good, are the ingredient characteristics which distinguish this body of

men; and of these Mr. Banks is the Chief. He is not, however, the best of his party. Mr. H. Thornton has at least three times more knowledge; Mr. Grant ten times more penetration, and Mr. Wilberforce incalculably more eloquence and address. On the whole, however, he is not a bad leader: he is sufficiently plausible and is tolerably good-humoured: he has some fluency and a good deal of industry; and above all, can adopt that apparently unconscious solemnity which, to the uninitiated, appears to elevate a subject without intending it, and gives to a mere party or personal design all the imposing attitude and aspect of a great national object. In all the pomp and circumstance of speech, the measured utterance, the unfamiliar cadence, and the unvaried gravity of manner, he is hardly inferior to Mr. Canning himself, though I am not disposed to compare the scanty mind of Mr. Banks with the considerable acquirements of Mr. Canning: yet each of these Gentlemen, in a different degree, is aware that assumed superiority of understanding, like an usurped tyranny, must not be approached too nearly. And no barrier appears so effectual as the affectation of

profundity and slow deliberation. Mr. Bankes however, as to mere delivery, is not so pompous as Mr. Canning, for his voice is thin and of small compass : though, however, it cannot strike the ear by sonorous impulse, it takes a faster hold of that organ by a lingering insinuation : in a word, it is a complete whine, which one is astonished to meet out of the precincts of a conventicle. An ingenious but morbidly fanciful poet, who is also a Methodist,* says of Adam ; that there was

—————“ In his speech
A dialect of heaven no art could reach.”

Whether this be an elevated or a childish idea, I shall not now stop to determine : but it serves as a clue to develope the reason for that strange, unnatural style of enunciation adopted by a certain class of Religionists, who, it is now evident, think that their modulation, if it resemble nothing on earth, must be perfectly celestial, as (to compare great things with small) a fustian poetaster conceits that

* I do not use this term contemptuously, but merely as the one most generally known to designate a sect who profess the more mystic and sublime doctrines of Christianity.

he is writing poetry because he is not writing plain prose. I have before said that this gentleman evinces some independence in his public conduct; he certainly is not the tool of Administration; much less is he the obsequious partisan of opposition. The best parts of his conduct are his efforts to reform the expenditure, which though weak and not remarkably consistent, appear at least to have been well-intentioned. On the subject of economy, indeed, he is a thorn of some sharpness in the side of a Minister, but I do not recollect any strenuous opposition on any other measures which Government has ever been anxious to carry. A Minister may gag the press, or keep the Catholic chained, with impunity, but woe to him if a shilling too much be expended in a bargain for tar or a building-contract. It is hardly necessary to say, that in the present condition of the finances of this country, economy should be the primary object with every statesman: I blame the small pedantry which thinks it the only one, and which, fortified by a few scraps from Mr. Burke, and dignified by having presided over a Committee of Finance, prates of price as the sole criterion in

every bargain or transaction, as if utility and national honour should never make a standard vary. Indeed, Mr. Bankes presumes too much on this head ; for his plans of reformation have but little tendency to effect their proposed aim. His Bill for the Abolition of Sinecures and Reversions has a pretty sound with it ; but what other merit can be ascribed to a measure which, while it was nominally removing a grievance, in fact would have aggravated it with double intensity, by its substitution of pensions to reward the exalted merits of servants of the Crown. I call it doubly expensive, because, by the present vile scheme of reversions, a possessor and an expectant are fed with the same single bribe, while the viler pension-plan would be compelled to apply distinct and separate baits.

On the whole, neither side of the House is very anxious for the support of Mr. Bankes, unless the contest for votes is very close : they seem to think of him, as *Falstaff* says of *Mrs. Quickly*, “ that he is an otter ; neither fish nor flesh ; a man knows not where to have him.” He certainly is a man who considerably over-rates himself, because

perhaps his self-importance and complacency are not much disturbed by the House; except that now and then his very provoking candour stimulates Mr. Whitbread to push aside, somewhat rudely, the flimsy mask which looks all ways, and smiles on all without cheering any.

MR. TIERNEY.

THERE are two vices, hypocrisy and apostasy, against which, more than against any others, the indignation of mankind appears to be universal and unqualified. Crimes, even of the most atrocious character, are scarcely more abhorred for their mischief than they are pitied as the lamentable incidents to human frailty : but let a hypocrite or an apostate be exhibited, and our nature sickens at the view : the heart acknowledges no kindred with such a being, and refuses all sympathy even to its misfortunes, which it considers as exotic additions, and not the natural produce of the human soul. This indignant feeling is not so much the consequence of education, as an instinct born with us as a pledge of the necessity of mutual confidence and good faith, without which not only would the foundations of civil society be subverted, but each individual man must shun his fellow, and the human race become less gregarious than

tigers or hyenas. The intuition which can penetrate into the recesses of the heart, the foresight which through the fair-seeming excellence of the character of to-day can discriminate all the errors and the crimes of the future—these powers are denied to us as too mighty for our uses: but they are amply compensated by the wisdom of an unconscious impulse, which acts with a precision that no worldly experience could confer, and with an utility proportionate to its great origin. At the same time there is great danger lest this fine adjunct of our nature, this faithful touchstone of conduct, may be assumed and arrogated by those who are influenced by far different feelings: by men who, while they pretend to detest an interested inconsistency, in fact only envy the good fortune of those whose change has been accompanied with advantages, or by others who hate the magnanimity which they dare not imitate, which could emancipate itself from prejudices or errors once perhaps too openly and strenuously avowed. Let not this sentiment be considered as an apology for the real apostate, for him who, for the paltry motives of wealth or perferment, aban-

does the firm convictions of his understanding, still less for that meaner sort of renegadoes, who would denounce and persecute all those who honestly cling to the cause which themselves have deserted. But it may serve to palliate or excuse the aberrations of those who, in the ardour of youth, have shown that the energy of their feelings was not equalled by the extent of their knowledge, or the comprehensiveness of their intellect; who, in their impatience to establish a darling theory, have, with an unhesitating, imprudent bravery, overlooked all obstacles of time and place, and circumstance. Indeed, there can hardly be a more real object of compassion than the young man who, warmed by the contemplation of Utopian excellence, and of generous examples, but with a skill too little experienced for an appropriate application of them, or with an understanding too limited to view a subject in all its branches, yet impetuously begins his career by a fearless avowal of general propositions of unattainable perfection. Old courtiers laugh to see the youngster caught in a net, where to stay and to escape will be almost equally fatal to the character: better-natured men view with

pain the aspiring intrepidity of the unwise Phaeton, which will precipitate him into difficulties insurmountable by common skill. What is the progress? The ardent theorist, as his knowledge and views become enlarged, would willingly qualify his too general declamations. To persist in error contrary to conviction, he feels to be unworthy of a gentleman : to confess his mistakes he knows will be misconstrued, and that himself will be branded with contempt. If he is a weak man, terrified equally by his own self-condemnation and the hisses of the public, he fluctuates for ever in a despicable state of indecision : if his mind be of a stronger cast, he at once makes the bold avowal of recantation, which afterwards renders his motives for ever dubious, and detaches all confidence from all his actions.

Reflections like these will naturally be suggested by the contemplation of several of our Parliamentary Characters : many of them of necessity arose from even a cursory view of the public life of Mr. Tierney. This Gentleman, when he considers his present unpopularity in the nation, and his utter want of weight in the House of Commons, must

look back with some astonishment or regret on those days of juvenile ardour when, either from intemperate zeal or from the sordid desire of inveigling a foolish faction, he uttered those glowing denunciations against existing systems, which stole the hearts of the Borough Electors. The man for whose presence no one cares, and whose sentiments scarcely ever elicit one smile of regard, must hold it to be the very baseless dream of a shadow, when the recollected scenes of former times pass before his mind,—when his imagination pictures to him those stately burgesses, Messrs. Alcock and Favell, almost dancing with rapture at his oracular sentences,—when even a glance of his person was sufficient to convert that most reputable but dirty district of Southwark into a theatre for gaiety and festivity,—when even the infants of the enthusiastic electors* were baptized by his name, to pledge them to the future admiration and imitation of so great a patriot. Was Mr. Tierney then sincere in his popular professions ; or, at the time when

* Some years afterwards, when Mr. Tierney became odious to his old friends, they took an odd method of showing their contempt, by calling their dogs by his name.

he presided with so much *eclat* over that sacred band "the Real Friends," in a paltry club-room, (Mr. Tierney will understand the allusion,) when the active citizen worshipped no idol except that rather Nebuchadnessar image, the majesty of the people, did he even then adhere to the opinions of his aristocratic friends the self-named Whigs—did he even then feel that love of place which made him so easy a prey to Mr. Addington? These are questions which none but Mr. Tierney can answer. I certainly shall not erect myself into a judge of hidden motives and impenetrable causes. There are not sufficient data for the solution; and Mr. Tierney, great arithmetician as he is, knows that even in the doctrine of chances, some sure and definite quantities must be given to find merely a possible result. I can discover no such certain starting-grounds for this investigation: neither in the nature of man nor in the character of Mr. Tierney. I will not believe that it is easy and obvious for any individual man to assume and personate whatever figure he pleases: still less will I believe that a Gentleman of such education and such steady sagacity, as all must feel the late Southwark re-

presentative to be, could miscalculate or misapprehend so grossly as to think that a solid superstructure could stand on the flimsy basis of insincerity. The matter must however remain undecided to the world, unless the only person who can elucidate the mystery will condescend to instruct our ignorance by a confessional treatise which, as it shall turn out, may serve either for a comment or an antidote to the politics of Machiavel. As to myself, taking it for granted that Mr. Tierney's professions were honest—believing that he was actuated by the sincerest principles when he opposed Mr. Pitt with such vehemence, and defied him “to the utterance,” even at the hazard of his life: (for though many have laid down their lives from mistaken zeal, yet few if any have done so merely to give effect to a joke)—believing also that his former ardour of Reform was, though he was not quite a boy or a novice, yet a relic of the fiery heedlessness of youth, and that his subsequent conversion was the consequence of impartial conviction:—with all these items of belief in my mind I must say, that Mr. Tierney has been very ill used by the misjudging Public. They have hastily

taken a rational alteration for an interested tergiversation, and suppose that one of the ablest and clearest-headed men of the age could not see what every child sees, that consistency is the best policy. This unjust dislike, these unkind suspicions of the people, have been of serious injury to Mr. Tierney, and I think to the community. From this cause it comes, that the most disposable and useful talents for business, the utmost shrewdness of discernment, the most perspicuous views of trade and finance, the most powerful because the most intelligible logic, and above all the most penetrating sarcasm and the most invulnerable self-possession,—qualifications which might raise him to the highest eminence in a popular assembly,—are nevertheless entirely robbed of their use and effect. Such is the result of that unfavourable opinion which is attached to the man who has abandoned his old professions. He who could even make the firm seat of Mr. Pitt to totter, and might frequently, almost without an effort, have shoved the present Ministry from their stools, must now be content to get a majority on a matter of form, and think it gain to beat such a statesman as Mr. Garrow on a technical

objection. But though Mr. Tierney unfortunately has but little weight in the House, yet from his abilities he is always heard with pleasure : nor is there any man who is treated with more external respect by a Minister. This is but politic ; for Mr. Tierney has a power of ridicule, and a caustic severity of satire, which can corrode the very heart's core ; which, therefore, those who love safe skins are not eager to provoke. One thing there is which, independently of all the above-mentioned causes, greatly diminishes the confidence of Mr. Tierney's auditors : in his most serious and earnest speeches as to argument, there is an air of conversational carelessness and levity in the manner which seems to hint that the speaker is almost indifferent as to success, and that he would be the first to laugh at those who should be persuaded by his ratiocination. This I have no hesitation in saying would be a most illiberal inference : the defect in question evidently arises from that coolness of temperament, which reasons rather than feels, and which scorns to attain its end by any surprise on the heart, when it can fairly and dispassionately convince and conquer the understanding.

In a popular assembly, however, where for one man who thinks there are ten who feel, such a manner cannot fail to be detrimental, or at least useless, to him who adopts it. Upon the whole, Mr. Tierney may be quoted as one of the most unfortunate instances of popular injustice. I will not annoy him by stating to him what he might have been, if he had been less precipitate and unreserved in former times; but shall merely lament, in the name of the public, that youthful errors, or popular mistake, have deprived the nation of the effective services of a man who might have been the most useful (I can scarcely except Mr. Whitbread) of all the Parliamentary Characters of the day.*

* This character, I cannot tell why, was by some misunderstood as if it was intended for a panegyric on Mr. Tierney: the obscurity, if any, arises from the perplexed nature of the subject: for the motives and intentions of Mr. Tierney must be classed among those things which are perfectly inaccessible to the human understanding.

MR. W. SMITH AND MR. WILBERFORCE.

THERE are some men who confer dignity on the cause which they espouse; there are others who derive all their dignity from it. Hampden and Russell and Sydney throw an additional glory even over the sacred head of Liberty, while, on the other hand, the worthy persons who assemble at taverns to eat anniversary sirloins and quaff periodical port, in honour of the same illustrious deity, excite rather our good will for the honesty of their opinions, than our respect or admiration for the energies either of mind or body with which they prosecute the designs that they have embraced. All who are embarked in the same good undertaking deserve their full portion of praise:—but there is that natural feeling of aristocracy among mankind—I mean—that natural deference to the rightful supremacy either of superior intellect or superior virtue, that all attendant spirits are willing and happy to yield the precedence to the one whose lustre is felt to add brilliancy

to their own spheres of operation. Jove and his satellites describe the same grand orbit in the Heavens, yet "Jove's satellites are less than Jove." Cato and his legions equally chose, and supported with equal perseverance, that noble party, which a fine-minded youth* has placed on a basis of rivalry even with the gods: yet to the hardy followers and common men, it has been thought sufficient reward that they fought for Roman freedom, while the poets and the philosophers have lavished all their stores of panegyric upon the hero of Utica. Indeed I suspect that the expiring liberty of Rome would have hardly elicited a sigh of regret, unless her fate had involved also the fate of Cato and of Tully. But I am wandering; indeed how is it possible to stand still on classic ground: some fresh beauty invites us at every step: some splendour, never to be staled by frequency, opens itself in every vista. There was how-

* I allude to that generous burst of enthusiasm from Lucan:

"*Victrix causa diis placuit, sed victa Catoni.*"

Translated with great spirit by Stepney:

"The Gods and Cato did in this divide,
They chose the conquering, he the conquered side."

ever in old time a word of disenchantment which could turn in a moment the golden palaces of fairy land into dreary deserts; there is also now a magic phrase—"the House of Commons,"—the bare repetition of which at once drives from the head all thoughts of Grecian genius and Roman independence. Scared at this word I return directly to my starting post:—I mean then to quote Mr. W. Smith as one of those persons whose rank and consideration are to be attributed solely to the cause in which he has thought proper to engage himself. He has had the courage to touch the awful ark of the pure English Constitution, and it is his praise, and no slight praise, that he has not utterly sunk in so great an attempt. He always comes before us in the pleasing form of an advocate of the civil and religious rights of the people: and what friend of humanity can find it in his heart to say a word against so good and liberal-minded a person. What criticism would not be hooted down which should aim to point out the defects of such a character. To be sure his intellect is rather small: but then his little energy is all exerted on the right side. It may be said that he is rather conceited; be it so: it is the vanity of con-

scious rectitude. There is no denying that he prattles too much : but does he not prattle about reform ? It is probable indeed that if, by the accident of education, or perhaps of a more limited way of thinking, Mr. Smith had been enlisted among the general ranks of Ministerialists or Oppositionists, the public would have heard nothing of him, except that now and then he moved an address, or seconded a motion : but he is at the head of a party which, however small, begins at last to assume some consequence in the nation, and to agitate a little the ponderous security of the Church. The light troops of Methodism (I call them so rather on account of their activity, than of their elegance or skill) have considerably annoyed the grand army of the establishment : the slow however, but well-directed fire of the Socinian engineers seems calculated to make more effectual breaches and havoc in their ranks. I must say that I do not myself apprehend much danger from the attacks of either : the question of a clerico-political institution has so little to do with religion, and so much with the practice and prejudices of nations, that no state of society can easily be imagined where at some period of its progress that ill-matched pair,

the Church and State, will not be forced into an union. Every art has its quackeries, and this strange affinity, the darling of politicians, is like the wonder-working stone of the chemists. But this is not a place to discuss this important question : I merely allude to it in passing to comfort the episcopal bench, who might be afraid that their mitres might fall from them at the touch of Unitarian reason. Much as I respect Mr. W. Smith, I cannot help thinking that he now and then assumes too much on this supposed power : he evinces sometimes a prim petulance, which however belongs rather to his party than himself. I am not very anxious to provoke the anger of a whole body of respectable personages : but there really is a coxcomical pretension to superior rationality about these sectarians, which would be perfectly ludicrous if they did not sometimes presume to be insolent and dogmatical. Be this as it may, the prevailing spirit of his *corps* induces Mr. W. Smith occasionally to affect a tone not warranted by his mental powers, and to intermeddle in business which does not stand in need of such an auxiliary. It is not however my wish to be severe on a man who, how-

ever limited in his capabilities, is always right in his intentions, and who, whenever the good cause is to be pleaded, furnishes towards it all the help which his understanding and exertions can afford. I love goodness in whatever shape it may present itself, and only regret that its grandeur of power does not compel me to add admiration to my love.

To go from the calm good sense of Mr. W. Smith to the enthusiastic declamation of Mr. Wilberforce, may seem to some a very rapid transition : but those who have watched the conduct of these gentlemen must, I think, see that their object is the same, and that therefore they ought to be associated. He whose wish is to emancipate opinion from penalty will rejoice to have for his companion the man who has, though late indeed, so eloquently pleaded the Catholic Cause, and who for years stood forth the irrepressible Champion of the Rights of the Negro. Indeed, when I consider the ardent and persevering struggle which Mr. Wilberforce so long maintained against the united strength of power and prejudice, and contemplate his final success in that noble work, I feel it to be a humiliation to descend to scan petty de-

fects, and the mere errors of our common humanity. Who that looks upon an abundant harvest, ripened by the rays of a summer sun, will sit down to calculate how often that sun has been overclouded? Or, to come more to men and things, who would estimate Locke by his prolixity, or Shakspeare by his puns? Yet such is the rage for analyzing faults;—the common mind is so much more fitted to seize a flaw than to comprehend an excellence, that a writer would be thought most blind and partial who would suffer even a saint to pass by unreprehended. What then can be alleged against Mr. Wilberforce? Want of decision, arising, some think from timidity, others say from want of high mindedness, seems to be his principal foible. Often will he support a position in a strain of eloquence to which the House is but little accustomed, and end (Oh lame conclusion!) in persuading almost every mind but his own. He has at length however broke the chain of his scruples, and last Session, with a warmth of language and manner quite his own, unequivocally recommended the abolition of penal statutes in matters of religion. The speeches indeed of Mr. Wilberforce are

among the very few good things now remaining in the British Parliament: his diction is elegant, rich, and spirited: his tones (excuse some party-whine) are so distinct and so melodious, that the most hostile ear hangs on them delighted. Then his address is so insinuating that, if he talked nonsense, you would feel yourself obliged to hear him. I recollect that last Session, when the House had been tired night after night with discussing the endless questions relating to Indian policy, when the commerce and finances and resources of our Oriental Empire had exhausted the lungs of all the speakers, and the patience of all the auditors—at that period Mr. Wilberforce, with a just confidence in his powers, ventured to broach the hacknied subject of Hindoo conversion. He spoke three hours, but nobody seemed fatigued; all indeed were pleased, some with the ingenious artifices of his manner, but most with the glowing language of his heart. Much as I differed from him in opinion, it was impossible not to be delighted with his eloquence: and though I wish most heartily that the Hindoos might be left to their own Trinity, yet I felt disposed to agree with him, that

some good must arise to the human mind by being engaged in a controversy which will exercise most of its faculties. Mr. Wilberforce is now verging towards age, and speaks but seldom : he, however, never speaks without exciting a wish that he would say more : he maintains, like Mr. Grattan, though not with quite the same consistency, a considerable respectability of character by disdaining to mix in the daily paltry squabbles of party : he is no hunter after place, though he is a little too much haunted with a passion for which he may quote the authority of St. Paul, of pleasing all men and of being all to all. I was sorry when, no longer able to retain the dignity of representing the greatest County in the Kingdom, he condescended to sit as Member for a petty Borough. But something must be forgiven to an old man whose habits are formed. Parliament has been to him the scene of all his active exertions, of his pleasures and his glory. We can pardon the old dramatist who goes every night to take his unviolated seat in the pit : we sympathize with the old soldier who would hobble a whole day's march to see a review : and shall less indulgence be given to the man who shows a

rather extravagant fondness to cling to the place ennobled by the memory of great men, now no more, and endeared by the recollections of his own triumphs. I confess I always look with equal respect and pleasure on this eloquent veteran, lingering among his bustling but far inferior posterity; and well has he a right to linger on the spot where he achieved one of the greenest laurels that ever brightened in the wreath of fame: a laurel better than that of the hero, as it is not stained with blood or tears: better even than that of the statesman who improves the civilization of his country, inasmuch as to create is more glorious than to improve. And the man whose labours abolished the Slave-trade, at one blow struck away the barbarism of a hundred nations, and elevated myriads of human beings, degraded to the brute, into all the dignified capacities of civilized man. To have done this is the most noble, as it is the most useful work which any individual could accomplish: and in the contemplation of this great achievement Mr. Wilberforce and his friends may find full consolation for all the minor weaknesses and failings of his character.

SIR W. GARROW AND SIR S. ROMILLY.

IT is a common remark among those who are much acquainted with the House of Commons, that the Lawyers are the worst speakers in that assembly. This is not to be understood as if the gentlemen of a profession whose business is to talk had less to say than a merchant or a country gentleman ; the fault is that they talk too much, and that their technical habits are so intermixed with all their opinions, that they can scarcely discuss a question of peace or war without reference to a Term-Report, or without wishing to raise a point of mere verbal construction. Accustomed in their courts to consider every matter of equal importance, they adopt the same earnest tone and stiff solemnity of manner, whether they are disputing about violated morality or insulted liberty, or about a petty affray where a hat, value one shilling, has been torn in the scuffle. I do not blame them for this : it is the duty and dignity of the law to entertain

with respect and attention all those who appeal to it, and to deem nothing unimportant which affects the rights of a free man: it is, therefore, the duty of the legal advocate to urge every client's claim with all his power, well knowing that to every man his own particular case is of the highest and nearest concern. Yet it is obvious that the habits of thinking and speaking induced by such a system can never be endured out of their particular place: that, especially in a National Council, the same interest can never be attached to a turnpike-bill,—which is a paltry job between two parishes,—and a ministerial measure, which may affect the happiness of half the world. But, perhaps, the most unpleasant trait about a Lawyer in Parliament is the manner of his address. He is sure to fall into one of his two faults: if he is what is called a *Nisi-Prius* Lawyer, and has been in the continual habit of *talking over* juries, he will in that case show a vulgar consequence of demeanour, an ungentlemanly air, as of one who is dispensing information, a ridiculous anxiety to explain and illustrate what his auditors understand as well as himself, and lastly, an over-acted passion, which, however it may now

and then impose upon an undiscerning jury, is at once ludicrous and insulting when played before a body of well-educated and experienced men. If he is a Term Lawyer, or one chiefly occupied in arguing points of law before the Bench, then indeed he will not be so offensive, but he will be utterly uninteresting; he will be dry and logical, never advancing even a common-place without an authority, raising up objections which could occur to nobody but himself, merely to put them down again, and subdividing a minute point of debate into endless fragments, which none but the microscopic eye of a practised barrister can see. The House sleep—he goes on:—they wake at his twentieth head, and are forced to cough him into silence. Is it then impossible for a lawyer to rise above the trammels of his profession? Does his profession necessarily preclude all knowledge and all manner but those which seem more peculiarly to belong to it? The science of the law, to be rightly so called, comprehends, not merely the acquaintance with judicial decisions, with statutes and the routine of the Courts, but a knowledge of the times and circumstances under which the laws were made, of

the reasoning on which they were founded, and of the benefits which they have produced. I know very well that it is not the business of a judge or an advocate to disturb an established rule, but it is the duty of both to understand all its relations, and if necessary, to procure, or at least to recommend with all their authority, the abrogation of such a law. The Lawyer also should be thoroughly conversant with men; he should be able to detect equally the partialities of a complainant and the sophistries of the accused. I do not allude to the nauseous fallacies which low minds and scoundrel habits have recourse to for puzzling a cause:—such knowledge is almost beneath a gentleman:—but he should be able, from an enlarged view of human motives, to discover and explain all those minute feelings which exasperate an injury to the mind of the sufferer, which diminish and excuse it to the mind of the inflictor. As the variety of subjects which will from time to time occupy his attention is almost boundless, so ought also his knowledge to be: as he will have to address men of various dispositions and various intellects, he should have at his command all the tones of eloquence, and be equally

able to enforce and insinuate conviction, to direct the understanding of the reflecting, and to mould the passions of the sensitive. Such is what a perfect Lawyer ought to be—Alas! it is almost an ideal picture. This great variety of attainments is too much for the limited capacities of man; the pleader finds his mind filled, to crowding, with his precedents alone, while the advocate, who determines to be eloquent, fears to look even at a page of black-letter, lest “he should petrify a genius to a dunce.” There are, however, some more capacious intellects, which have been able to reach a distinguished eminence in all the qualities which constitute a great Lawyer; though it must be confessed that no one man has reached the very summit in all. Rome had its Scævola and Cicero: we have had our Coke and Bacon: but then, in these instances, the lawyers were but second-rate orators, and the philosophic orators were not first-rate lawyers.

These observations may perhaps tend to show that the defects of Lawyers are not to be ascribed to the science itself, but to the individuals, whose powers are too finite to attain the grand height of their noble profes-

sion. I cannot better illustrate these remarks, than by the examples of two gentlemen, who have each acquired a high reputation; but who, at the same time, are so characteristically different, that it could scarcely be imagined that they have all their lives prosecuted studies of similar tendency.

Sir Wm. Garrow is an ingenious man, more skilled in human nature than legal lore; he has a penetration amounting almost to intuition into the motives of vulgar depravity, and can trace a low trick through all the mazes of a pettifogger's cunning: but his view of mankind, though accurate as far as its extent, is at the same time very confined. Who ever heard him utter a liberal and philosophical sentiment, or, in fact, any thing which might lead one to suppose that he had any notion that mankind consists of any other classes of creatures besides rogues and fools, always excepting the venerable persons who happen to be Judges or Great Officers for the time being? His idea of men is about as correct as if a person should take his opinion of London from the lanes of Wapping, or deny the picturesque beauties of England, because he had been nearly choked with fogs in the fens of Lin-

colnshire.—I should like to know, as a mere satisfaction of curiosity, whether any process of the most sensible reasoning, or any series of the best authenticated facts, could convince Sir William that a Jew could be respectable, or a scholar not an idiot. But this narrow-mindedness is the defect of his education; the ability with which he has improved his limited vision is all his own. His erudition or knowledge of things is still more scanty—and that snatched, not taken—seized rather from conversation than collected from study: yet what he knows he knows so perfectly, and can express so clearly, that one can see at a glance that he has only wanted the opportunity of instruction, to be enabled to take rank among the enlightened thinkers and powerful reasoners. His apprehension is exceedingly ready, his power of managing his thoughts great and unencumbered, and his judgment has all the correctness of common sense. Such he appears at the bar of the King's Bench, and such, when divested of his pompous canopy of be-powdered horse-hair,* and fur-

* For the information of the ignorant, I must discover that lawyers' wigs are made of horse-hair.

nished with a plain brown wig, he takes his place in the House of Commons. He is not, however, equally successful there as in his own Court. Whenever he speaks, his unassuming opening and unequalled fluency betray the House into an admiring kindness: they begin to cheer: this *hear, hear*, is his ruin. Warmed by the applause, he in an instant loses all consciousness of the scene before him—throws aside his cloak of humility—assumes the braggart tone with which he addresses a Jury—grows more shallow and more dogmatic in the same proportion every moment—and “to suit the action to the word,” accompanies his tempestuous speeches with almost threatening gesticulations. At length he sits down, having offended or annoyed all his auditors, and, what is rather curious, having completely disgusted himself. For presumptuous as is this gentleman, yet his presumption is more than equalled by his exceeding bashfulness: his rank, his astonishing success, his talents, well known both to himself and the world, have all conspired to magnify the former failing: the latter arises partly from a restricted intercourse with society, but chiefly from his own keen sagacity.

For let a silly observation or an error of ignorance escape him,—any thing which may be converted into an instrument of derision against him,—and the same intensity of sight which enables him to apprehend the defects of others, makes him see his own with double precision: and being deficient in dignity of mind, he is ready to sink at an exposure which to another man would be the veriest trifle. Sir William is now, rather unexpectedly I believe even to himself, advanced to the honours of his profession, and may reasonably look for still higher eminence: should that happen, he is one of those to whom it will be a benefit instead of a disservice, to forget, as far as possible, his former self.

Sir Samuel Romilly, on the other hand, is one to whom no rank could give additional lustre, and from whose character to take away a sentiment or an action would be to detach a jewel from a crown: such is the general consistency and harmony of its parts. As this introduction seems to portend a very encomiastic description, I will, before I proceed, show that I am perfectly aware of the failing usually imputed to this respectable lawyer. He is said to be easily irritated, and it must

be confessed that the tone in which he opens his enlightened plans to the House frequently indicates wounded feelings; or seems to imply that he shall consider any opposition as something worse than mere difference of opinion. I have little doubt that a more conciliating manner would have been more effectual for his purposes: for great bodies of men, like individuals, must be flattered into goodness: anger and reproach should be extended only to old offenders, who are past all cure. I am sorry, therefore, to see a defect in Sir Samuel which may be some impediment to his objects; but I think it may be easily explained, and even justified. A benevolent man, who is on the watch to be useful,—whether he retires to solitary reflection, or walks abroad among his fellow-creatures,—can hardly pass an hour in which some circumstance shall not present itself to disturb and agonize his feelings. If he is not, what many kind-hearted men are, constitutionally careless; if on the contrary, he is of a contemplative cast, he finds it impossible to disengage the painful idea from his mind: it haunts his dreams and even his pleasures: distresses upon distresses accumulate before his recollection or his ima-

gination, till he is irritated into a state of torture only equalled by those sufferings of others from which it results. This at first may seem a strange dispensation, that the kind should suffer for their kindness : but who shall presume to arraign the wisdom of Nature ! May not this sensation of uneasiness be the best security for the exercise of active benevolence ? It is not in man to endure pain without an effort to relieve it, and every attempt which the good man makes to remove his own anxiety will be an additional instrument towards effecting the happiness of others. Such was the result of the glorious restlessness of Howard : such will be the consequence of the noble perseverance of Sir Samuel Romilly.

Let this serve in excuse for a failing which he has in common with many good men ; but who, even if it were inexcusable, could be base enough to put it in competition with his numerous excellencies ? Take him merely as a speaker,—he is not only superior to his brother lawyers, but, with two or three exceptions, to any debater in the House. Though confessedly one of the most learned of his profession, he is the only one who never manifests any of its pedantry : he descants on le-

gal subjects with the wisdom of a philosopher, as well as the knowledge of an historian ; and though he refers to authority, and indeed is fond of building upon the authority of the enlightened, yet he discharges the duty of a legislator, which is to examine, and not tacitly to acquiesce in the precedents of former ages. Coming from a mind at once accurate, comprehensive, and enlarged, his sentiments have about them all the marks of wisdom, to which one would think no opposition could ever be offered, unless it is that they are not quite suited to the character of the times. I could dwell with pleasure on his political honesty, to which he has, perhaps, sacrificed the objects of an honourable ambition : but who does not know it, and appreciate it as fully as myself ? Who does not look on Sir Samuel Romilly as the sure refuge, either for the redress of a private injury, or the exposure of a public crime ?

I should almost feel as if I were insulting this gentleman if I were to offer any consolation for the possible loss of a rank, which is so amply compensated by the increase of pure reputation. I should wish indeed to see the first best man of his profession, occupying, at

some time, the first rank in it; and giving dignity to some new title, which might hereafter be quoted as the heraldic name for fine sense and integrity. But this is merely a matter of taste. Sir S. Romilly has already reached the summit: no honours could add weight to his opinions in the general mind; no station could make his virtues more conspicuous. As a ministerial Peer, he might, no doubt, be better able to carry his schemes by the authority of votes; but as a plain Member of the Commons he is perhaps working with more valuable advantage, by impressing the excellence of his proposals on the understandings of the voters: and, to a mind like his, it must appear nobler to effect his purpose by the influence of reasoning, than by the force of power.

MR. CANNING.

IT would be an amusing speculation to investigate the relation between men's merits and their pretensions, to resolve into its mean elements every gaudy figment of imposture, and to devise a sort of mental standard, or scheme of moral parallax, by which even the false parts of a character should enable us to discover the true. Such an inquiry would soon show that there has existed scarcely one well-known person, to whom has been assigned his true place in the scale of reputation. Many a great General would, by such a process, soon sink into a mere drill-serjeant—many a great painter into a plodding mechanic, without imagination or intellect—and many a great orator into a shallow and noisy declaimer. To pursue the examination with effect, it would be necessary to discover the causes of these delusions, and by what accidental or inherent qualities of our nature it comes to pass, that the mind, like the eye, seems doomed to misapprehend the real

magnitude of almost every object presented to it. I do not affect to be able to explain all the reasons for this common error, but two or three occur with tolerable readiness. Whoever considers with what haste the opinions of most people are formed, and how prone we are to acquiesce in all our conceptions, together with that carelessness about accuracy which is induced by the general habits of society, will not be much surprised that a pretender of tolerable skill should be able to arrest regard in the first instance, and afterwards to keep it, among persons not over anxious about the truth of his claims. If too he should have the good fortune to awaken the attention of some patron eminent in talents and station, for which purpose a very little ingenuity is sufficient, in that case the deception becomes an axiom, the air-blown bubble a very diamond. For who shall dispute the discernment of the illustrious A. or of the never-enough-to-be-celebrated B. ; and when even a philosopher has said that he would rather err with Plato than think right with others, what common man shall presume to depreciate the protégé of men famous for their knowledge and wisdom. Added to this,

there is an abstract pleasure in being cheated : falsehood is so prepared and prompt with all the details of her fabrication, arranges every thing with such a satisfactory nicety, accounts for every thing with such a persuasive plausibility, and throws over all such an air of smiling and tranquillizing ease, that no wonder she acquires with the unthinking and indolent, who are nine-tenths of mankind, an immense superiority over truth with its unadorned dryness and its uninviting mysteries, which to be understood must be traced through the mazes of the human heart and the still more complex intricacies of contending systems of opinion. But the firmest friends to deceit and prejudice are to be found among that large class of mankind, the half-educated and partially experienced. These are they who consider any attempt to instruct them as a trespass on their natural rights, who resent the eradication of a mistake as they would the violation of their property, and are as much startled at an improvement, as was Homer's King of Hell, lest the light of Heaven should burst in upon his loathsome darkness. These are the instruments for an impostor and pretender to wield : a little flat-

tery to some of their prejudices, a little adaptation to some of their caprices, a little indulgence to some of their passions, shall win their hearts and hoodwink their understandings, and *Stephano* shall be a God to *Caliban*. It has been said that the wise direct the thoughts of mankind. Alas! the wise only govern the wise: the rest choose to rush on without a guide, to struggle and jostle in the dark; and give them but a little music that they may break their shins to a tune, lay but a little flattering unction to their errors, and they will pay for their blindness and their calamities, and turn with abhorrence from all the proffered advantages of an enlightened thinking. The Jews killed their Reformer; the Athenians killed theirs; and such must ever be the fate of the wise and good, who wish to diffuse wisdom without the help of wealth and honours, of artillery and the sword. I have been insensibly hurried along to a greater extent than is necessary for my present purpose: the main object of these preliminary reflections being to show why the pretending part of mankind succeed so much beyond their deserts, and why that success is generally unmolested and undisputed.

Among the foremost of those whose pretensions exceed their merits, and whose pretensions have been allowed, may be placed Mr. Canning—a Gentleman whom Fortune, in a joke, has pushed above his natural elevation, to be pointed at as the quintessence of wit and statesmanship. In his youth, at a time when Whigs were a very different sort of people from those who now bear that name,—when their fire was carrying annoyance into every quarter of the Ministry, and their humour was casting ridicule over all its disasters,—at such a time, the aid of a young man of talents, with some fun at his command, was hailed as a most useful acquisition by a Minister, who, though he rarely condescended himself to use any but great guns, was not displeased to see small-arms in the hands of his auxiliaries. Then it was, that by the strength of a few ludicrous and well-timed parodies, not one-third of which by the way were his own, Mr. Canning caught the notice and consequent patronage of Mr. Pitt. Coming into Parliament under such auspices, he could not but make his way: he delivers a speech more shallow and more frothy than a college-declaration; but what can be done? One side of

the House is bound to protect the young man on whom the Premier smiles, and the other side is not disposed to much severity, partly because the maiden orator is a kind of *eleve* of its own, and chiefly because the House is at no time inclined to damp the ardour of a young Gentleman of tolerable promise who attempts to rise in the world. Encouraged on one hand, and not opposed on the other, with his path smoothed and disencumbered of all those difficulties which might exercise his understanding or enlarge his experience, and raised by a train of lucky circumstances into high situation, he soon forgets the cause of his elevation, becomes proud and dogmatical, and fancies himself a great Statesman ; when his sole qualifications are a memory well stored with the school-boy's common-places, a solemn utterance like that of the prologue-speaker to a tragedy, and an unbending pomp of attitude and manner strongly resembling the burly dignity of a country pedagogue. Indeed, the great characteristic of this orator is his mock importance ; he seems always to walk on stilts. Whatever be the subject, whether he is presenting a petition or delivering a laboured harangue, he always speaks in

the same measured tone and set manner. He dares not be familiar ; aware perhaps of the slender title by which he holds his reputation, he will not descend into the open and common area, but keeps himself from too near attack behind the formal entrenchment of a constant gravity. It may seem some contradiction to this to state that Mr. Canning affects to be a joker ; but his jokes are all of the dry and scholastic sort, sarcasms which repel—not pleasantries which attract. Never playful like Mr. Fox, nor good-humoured like Mr. Sheridan, he struts through a comic antithesis with the air of a philosopher, and deposits an Epigram with equal grandeur as if he were delivered of an Epic Poem. The House indeed laugh, because it is polite to laugh when a Gentleman affects to joke ; but it is never a laugh of kindly sympathy with the joker ; on the contrary, it merely expresses that the audience are not so dull but that they are able to apprehend a witticism. It is evidently the perpetual care of Mr. Canning to make himself appear wiser and profounder than he is ; and yet to any one who thinks it worth his while to fathom him, there is no man whose depth is more easily dis-

cernible. His great excellence is the school-taught taste by which he shuns all vulgarities in opinion and diction, and is enabled sometimes to throw a classical air over a common subject: his great defect is that he does not think. All he says partakes of the mustiness of memory; it is uttered with the tone of one who talks by book, and has none of the glowing freshness and cheering brightness of thoughts newly combined, or newly created by the genius of the speaker. His mind has none of those qualities which go to the composition of a great intellect: it has no grasp, little penetration, and no foresight. It has been said of some eminent persons, that they never were boys: it may be said of the person in question, that he will never be a man. He can never disengage himself from his puerile trammels, nor look at a subject with the eye of common sense and common experience. It has indeed frequently fallen to his lot to advocate the cause of wisdom; but even then his thoughts have been but in a low proportion to the dignity of his subject: he has been content to excite applause by pretty arrangement of phrases, instead of impressing a respectful conviction by the en-

largement and accuracy of his views. I allude to his florid harangues on the Spanish war, on the Catholic claims, and on some late occasions. A few plain, straightforward sentences uttered with the calm reasonableness of Lord Castlereagh, and the simple, manly energy of Mr. Whitbread, have and deserve more weight than whole folio volumes of such speeches. In fact, the House listens to Mr. Canning not as a statesman, but as one who may amuse them by his well-selected centos and apt quotations: for it is pleasant now and then to be thrown back on one's school associations. Let not the reader imagine that I wish to undervalue classical learning: so far am I from such a notion, that I consider the Greeks, with one or two exceptions, as the greatest and best masters in every kind of wisdom, whether of speculative research or of every day application. I have no doubt that of two men, equal in other respects, the best scholar would be in exact proportion the wisest statesman; that the study of Thucydides and Demosthenes, together with a careful inspection of passing events, would make a better politician than a knowledge of all the artful depravities and dirty trickeries display-

ed in Machiavel and the French scribblers of memoirs. I do not, therefore, object to Mr. Canning because he quotes Virgil or Tacitus (he does not seem to know much Greek) but because he merely quotes, and displays none of the reflection of the poet or the sagacity of the historian.

Mr. Canning seems to consider himself in his way as without a rival; but there are some young men in the House who may be expected to reach, and even overtake him. Mr. Grant, jun. with most of his defects, has a great deal more fancy and more learning; Mr. Peel and Mr. Robinson have his smartness and classical recollection, without the same injudicious assumption of importance. Upon the whole, it always appeared to me that Mr. Canning was strangely out of his place in the House of Commons: he should have adhered to that seminary from whence he came. The style of his thinking, the character of his knowledge, and his consequential manner, not to mention his skill in Latin verse, which, though inferior to Keates, or Goodall's, is at least far beyond the *Musæ Edinenses*, would altogether have made him an excellent first Master of Eton. I have

made no comment on his political conduct, partly because I have no wish to say severe things; partly because it is pretty well known and appreciated; and chiefly, because I believe no person cares one tittle about it. If, however, any ingenious Gentleman, who may be composing an *extempore* epigram on Statesmen, is at a loss for an allusion or two to give it point, I would recommend to him to pay some attention to the public character of one who at least puzzles, if he does not astonish, the minds of common and inexperienced observers.

MR. B. BATHURST AND MR. RYDER.

MY attempt to reduce Mr. Canning to his proper level, alarmed and irritated, as I expected, the whole host of pretenders : seeing the goodly but unsubstantial bulk which stood between them and their annihilation falling to pieces at the touch of truth, it was time for them to tremble and shriek for their own puny and unsheltered nakedness. For if the shadow shall vanish, what will become of the shadows of that shadow? Mr. Canning is, indeed, superior by an immeasurable distance to those juvenile aspirants who affect to imitate him : “ nine bad poets made a Tate ;” and the composition of such a speaker as Mr. Canning would, I allow, require at least a hundred of those young men about town, who, by the force of melting roundelays, positively written by themselves, or of extemporaneous speeches delivered for the twentieth time, succeed in astonishing dowager Countesses and half-pay Generals. I

will allow too, that their anger at seeing an assault made upon the magnificent reputation of their hero may be perfectly sincere. To minds scantily informed the erudition of Mr. Canning may appear immense; and his imposing tone, which seems to intimate that at least "he thinks he is thinking," may operate like a miracle on understandings which know not how to assume even the manner of thought. How shall I appease their indignant spirits? In times of old, it was usual when a great man was slain, for the friend of the deceased to rush out with all his bravery, and immolate some dozen common men as a propitiatory sacrifice to his august manes. I have no great inclination to deal destruction about me; I am not sufficiently chivalrous; but, perhaps, the critical dissection of Messrs. Bathurst and Ryder may console the grief of Mr. Canning's friends, at seeing the full-blown bubble burst and evaporated. It is curious to observe how seldom pity is rightly applied. A dull, honest fellow, who trots quietly along in his proper path, may be assailed with every weapon which impudent wit can vibrate: and yet, nobody cries out "shame;" every body, indeed, seems to en-

joy the joke, and cannot afford one half-sigh of pity for the man, who can neither defend himself, nor procure any other to defend him. On the other hand, make an impartial attempt to unmask a pompous pretender, and an outcry is immediately raised, as if the State were in danger. What is the reason of all this? It is because no man fancies himself dull, and therefore never makes common cause with the dull when insulted: again, every man almost is aiming at situation or character far above his real qualities, and therefore feels it to be a personal attack when any successful aspirant is exposed in his true form.

I shall not cater for the ill-natured taste of such persons by a severity shown to others which would be better applied to them: dullness is not in my eyes so contemptible as impudence. Meanwhile, though to advise these beings would be to sing to the deaf, yet it is to be wished that some expedient could be found to rid society of these impostorlings, who throng all the avenues to notice to the exclusion of their superiors, and whose bustling noise drowns the gentle appeals of unobtrusive excellence! What a pity that our Con-

stitution has not any where lodged a power which might condemn them to at least ten years of books and Pythagorean silence. But enough of them.—Mr. B. Bathurst seems to be one of those who in private life are called very sensible persons, because they have never ventured on an ingenious paradox, or deviated into an humourous absurdity. He is one who, firmly believing in that profound axiom that whatever is, is,—consequently considers every new idea as a non-entity, and to whom, therefore, any scheme of improvement must appear considerably more baseless than a vision. Like certain *dramatis personæ*, so well ridiculed in Sheridan's *Critic*, he tells his audience all that they knew before ; just to show, according to the old satirist's notion,* that he knows as much as they. There is not much harm in all this, especially as at first sight one discovers no parade in his manner : he prattles away in a conversational subdued tone, and seems to attach no more importance to his speech than it really deserves. Observe him, however, more closely, and his familiar gossiping air will be found to result

* Scire tuum nihil est, nisi te scire hoc sciat alter.

PERS. Sat.

from an immense self-opinion, which considers all it says as settled and matter of course, and therefore holds it useless to adopt a style to impress or persuade. I know nothing of the domestic connexions of this Gentleman, but as the critics say, I would pledge myself (*quovis pignore contendam*) that he is much accustomed to the society of antique aunts and maiden sisters: there is a temperate method of dictation about him as of a man used to direct the judgments of a coterie, whose sex and non-resistance prevent all possibility of ungentlemanly roughness. This habit, which may do very well in its proper sphere, is singularly ludicrous in such an Assembly as the House of Commons. It would be presumption in any one Member of that Assembly to undertake to decide with a judicial air any matter in dispute: it will be difficult to find a name for such conduct in a man of Mr. Bathurst's talents, particularly as, although he adopts the air of an arbitrator, he is less attended to than any one individual in the House. His self-love must be very great which can blind him to such a circumstance; nor do I know how to solve such difficulty. Perhaps, as Solomon,—who by the way ought

to be some authority on such a subject,— defines a wise man to be one who can render a reason, this Gentleman founds his claim to the character of wisdom on his peculiar propensity to give reasons even for the plainest and most self-evident truths. With great deference I think that Solomon alluded to a very different kind of reasoning to this: at any rate I am sure that if he had ever heard Mr. B. Bathurst he would never have promulgated his proposition in such general terms. The object of a reason, according to the most approved logic, is to make a thing plainer: Mr. Bathurst, like many famous logicians, contrives to make it the means of obscurity: he ratiocinates about the simplest matter till one is compelled to believe that he has not a perfect understanding even of an axiom. I have ventured to smile at these peculiarities of Mr. Bathurst: yet he is a Gentleman for whom, on several accounts, I feel much kindness and respect. He seems very goodnatured, and is, I believe, a sincerely honest man as far as his views can carry him. In confirmation of this opinion I need only say that he belongs to the school of Addington, the most upright and conscientious band of men that ever go-

verned a nation. Would to God that their knowledge had been more extensive, their thinking more enlarged : for, contrary to the practice of many politicians who shut their eyes to the light that bursts upon them, I have no doubt that these men would have been good in precise proportion to their knowledge. Wisdom and goodness are indeed one, and with the honest-minded knowledge and goodness are one also.

If Mr. Bathurst may be called a prattler, Mr. Ryder must I think be denominated a proser. With a similar reach of understanding, he is so unlike in manner, that he delivers the merest common-place with the air of a discovery,* and enforces it with as much energy of manner and diction, as if he really thought no being but himself could easily comprehend its truth. This is the natural error of a slow mind : conscious of the laborious research which it has expended on

* It is refreshing to turn aside from the pomp of little men to the simplicity of one really great ; Sir I. Newton prefaces one of his chapters, containing the most wonderful discoveries, with these few words : “ Sed nunc pauca de lunæ orbita loquemur.” I will now say a few words about the path of the moon. *Princip. lib. 1.*

the commonest problem, and knowing the general indolence of mankind, it thinks that the solution can only be known to itself, because it believes no one else has taken the same extraordinary pains to procure it. It is, however, a venial error and one scarcely worth notice, especially as he has now ceased to undertake the management of a principal department of State. When Mr. Perceval died, Mr. Ryder died too as a public character: the friendship of the Premier threw a consequence round him, which his own talents could never have acquired: that friendship being extinguished, the prop and buttress of Mr. Ryder's elevation fell to the ground, nor can he hope to rise again unless he should attract the regards of another friend equally warm. I do not wish to undervalue this Gentleman, who is a sensible and highly respectable man: but he has been hurt by being raised above his proper level. He was an excellent Judge-Advocate, and if he had so continued, would never have incurred a pelting storm of ridicule on his statesmanship* from the stores of Mr. Sheri-

* Mr. Sheridan's Speech on the Nightly Watch Bill.

dan. Young men who have the means of advancement, are not very fond of being advised to stand still; otherwise I would propose the example of this Gentleman for the consideration of Mr. Manners Sutton, who is at present much and deservedly respected in the House, but whose fame would not I think keep exact pace with his elevation.

MR. GRATTAN.

THERE is generally in the eloquence of a nation, as well as in its poetry, some striking and distinct character which separates it from all others, and constitutes as marked a difference as that which exists between Chinese ugliness and Grecian beauty. There are indeed some universal topics which all mankind recognize with equal readiness; there are sentiments and tones which find their way equally to the heart of the civilized and the barbarous—of the phlegmatic and the sensitive: yet, whether it is that the man of one clime is differently organized from the man of another, or whether of similar forms of society, no two can be exactly alike:—certain it is, that the favourite mode of thinking and speaking among one people may excite no interest in another;—that what awakens the enthusiasm of one country may by another be regarded with coldness or even with derision. There will, however, amid

all these various national modes, be some which every nation shall approve, as there will be others from which, with the particular exceptions of the countries adopting them, the universal taste will be abhorrent. It excites our respect for the populace, or if you will, the mob of Greece, when we read the profound reasoning and elaborate composition with which their demagogues held it necessary to address them : no flimsy verbiage, no noisy sophistry, no ruffian imagery pollute their popular harangues. All the energies of the human mind are employed to influence a people who must indeed be considered as the moral wonder of the world, who evinced the most refined relish, the most consummate taste in poetry, in philosophy, in the arts and sciences, and never degenerated into vulgarity, except in their humour : an exception which will the less astonish, when it is remembered that a fondness for the lowest fun is not only not incompatible, but even usual with the most enlarged and improved intellects. The Romans were a fine, steady, high-minded people, and if any of their popular orators

had reached us, I have no doubt that their speeches would contain the least possible leaven of nonsense and false taste. The authentic declamations however of their Gracchi and their Bruti, and of all their race of tribunes and favourites have perished : nor must we form a judgment of the nation's taste from those accomplished imitations of the Grecian sophists with which Cicero astonished the Greek-educated minds of a polished and patrician auditory. We have no relics of their purely popular assemblies : yet if the fabricated speeches of such powerful and observant writers as Livy, Sallust, and Tacitus, carry any authority, we can plainly see from them that a Roman demagogue, whether addressing a mob of artisans or of soldiers, never condescended to those low and unreasoning *hurly-burlies* of sentiment and diction which entrance an English or an Irish mob. Even in France, a nation which though incapable of poetry, has produced abundant specimens of eloquence,—even in the worst times of revolutionary France, their leaders, though familiar with all the savageries of the lowest brutality, never forgot to observe the dignity

of the understanding. Marat indeed was a vulgar ruffian in speech and act; but where will you find more accomplished and tasteful speakers than Brissot, Mirabeau, and Vergniaud: even Robespierre rarely lost view of the diction of a gentleman, nay of a philosopher. And the present Ruler of France * (of whom I must be allowed to say that the predominance of his hateful qualities above his good, together with the stupendous talent with which he conducts his destructive purposes, renders him one of the most baleful prodigies that ever puzzled and terrified the world), even this selfish and savage soldier, from the first moment of his career to his last address to his Senate, has never insulted with senseless vulgarities the fine taste of an enlightened nation, but has ever adopted with admirable skill the language of candid philosophy, and may be considered as the most consummate ape of the magnanimous and the wise that ever imposed on credulous inferiority. In England too, in its happier days, before City and Election Orators thought of imitating Demosthenes, or aspired

* This was written before the exile of Buonaparte.

to wield democracies with the bombast of Billingsgate—at the time when Sidney and Hampden, instead of the empty assistance of dull and foolish diatribes, studied as well as fought with unremitted ardour for their darling constitution—at that time, almost every demagogue was a scholar and a man of thinking, and knew what was due to a reflecting people. If Bradshaw or Ireton, or Ludlow or Vane, had talked like some modern orators, the people would never for a day have endured the degradation of their able and skilful Monarch; but Charles was subdued by the manners as well as by the intellect of his Judge; and perhaps there never was an occasion where a man pressed so pertinaciously, and conscious too (as he must have been) of the forcible truth of the remarks of his opponent, yet could act with such possessed and gentlemanly calmness as that with which, on that unfortunate occasion, Bradshaw treated Charles.

Of Ireland it is difficult to speak with any accuracy: the natural character of that people has been so exaggerated and defaced by centuries of ill-treatment, that its features can scarcely be seen, except through the dis-

torting mediums of anger and dejection. Enough however remains for us to distinguish that they are full of talent and spirit: that if their levity indisposes them for thinking, the intensity of their feelings supplies the place of thought: they feel till they think, while their neighbour nation thinks till it feels. Too sensitive to be dull, too careless to be tasteful, their eloquence at once interests and offends: it implies that they have found civilization too great a curse for them to be heedful of the forms of society, and in their glowing appeals to natural justice they disdain to borrow the technical paraphernalia of custom and of taste. It is this feeling which, in the unnatural condition of Ireland, makes its revenge more savage than a madman's; it is this which sometimes makes its oratory more vulgar than a barbarian's. I will not however act so unfairly as to take my specimens of its oratorical powers from its O'Connells; I will rather adduce its best men—its Burkes, and Sheridans, and Grattans. The first is like a cataract of mud, a stagnant ditch vexed into a torrent: the latter are great and powerful streams, rushing along with equal force and majesty, and whose over-

flowings are enough to fill a hundred petty rivulets.

I would not have it supposed, because I have joined the name of Grattan to those of Burke and Sheridan, that I consider him as of equal rank. Burke is at an immense distance above both : but between the two last, though Mr. Sheridan is beyond question the superior man, I think I see some similarity,—rather however in kind than in manner. Mr. Sheridan's aim was always, if he could, to expose the propositions of his adversary by a series of ludicrous contrasts : the mind of Mr. Grattan leads him to the same play of opposition and antithesis, though his disposition seems to feel anger where the other would only laugh. The understanding in these cases is evidently alike, though the habits of society have engendered a different taste. Again, there is some likeness in their style ; there is about them at the beginning a conversational carelessness amounting almost to laziness, a sort of lounging indifference, which more than half conceals their strong feeling. On a sudden, some thought, some word, sets fire to the train of their impressions : they fling away their sloth as Ulysses flung away the

beggar's weeds, and walk abroad in all the majesty of excited intellect and irresistible passion. Who shall oppose it? Reason is content to admire, and forgets to examine : but fortunately a tempest must be temporary. Indeed the paroxysms of Mr. Grattan are much shorter than those of Mr. Sheridan : and the former sinks at once from his celestial elevation down to mere earth. Not so with Mr. Sheridan : he, when once roused, never subsides into an uninteresting mediocrity : when he ceases to be energetic, he becomes elegant. When he is no longer the angel of the storm, he becomes the benignant genius whose presence cheers even the waste, and at whose every step upsprings a bed of living verdure. I must confess however that I have not known Mr. Grattan in his best days : looking at him now, a veteran not much short of seventy, and observing that attic fire which still warms his heart, I will not presume to say that he does not deserve the high reputation which he enjoys. I am content to bow with reverence to the consistent advocate of his country's rights, who for a long life has stood forward the powerful and almost successful champion of her cause

against an unparalleled weight of influence and prejudice, and who disdains to further his purposes by any paltry intermixture with the vulgar views of the Whig party, who somehow or other have of late years thought it right to advocate the Catholic cause. Some have said that Mr. Grattan sunk in character by his transplantation into the British Parliament. I cannot think so: there is no man heard with more fond respect; and deservedly, for there is no man who gives more pleasure. Indeed I know not a more gratifying sight than when Mr. Grattan rises: his petit person and fumbling voice at first awake no feeling but surprise that this man should be a commanding orator: in a moment you become interested by his gentlemanly manner and warm though very subdued tone: a striking thought or glowing expression drops out as if by accident, and assures us that we shall not be disappointed. He then rises to the dignity of eloquence, and every expectation is answered. Such a man therefore must not be quoted as an instance of over valued merit; for he has not, like Flood, sunk at once into an object of ridicule; or, like a recent candidate, fallen into the dead sea of mediocrity,

after being up cried as a wonder. The last case however was not a failure, but an instance of an over-rated man reduced to his proper level. It was a folly which deserved to be cheated, that could hope for much enlightened eloquence from the man * who thinks Rogers the first poet, and Madame de Stael the first philosopher, of the age.

* The Gentleman who lately failed so egregiously in Parliament is said to be the author of the articles in the *Edinburgh Review*, relating to Rogers and Madame de Stael.

MR. W. POLE AND MR. CROKER.

IT may not be unamusing to contemplate the portraits of two gentlemen, who may be considered as the most self-important persons in the House of Commons ;—a pre-eminence which, though not very desirable, must yet be termed remarkable, when it is remembered how full that assembly is of those slaves of conceit and self-love, viz. of young men who, yet tingling with school discipline, have by the help of family-boroughs been lifted into legislators ; and of old men who, having without any extraordinary talent or virtue amassed princely fortunes and the highest rank, are allowed with impunity to detail by the hour the maxims of their oracular experience. It is curious to observe the different shapes which self-importance assumes, according to the different qualities on which it operates. In a constitutionally modest man, as for instance in Mr. H. Addington, it shows itself in a stiff and fretful humility, like the stately and irri-

table chastity of a virgin of three-score: in a forward clever youth, as in Mr. Peel, it is a lively pertness, careless of giving offence, because it thinks the wit of its sarcasm an ample compensation for the bitterness of its satire; and because the perpetual flattery and loud laugh of weak friends make it fancy itself "a chartered libertine." But the pleasantest exhibition is when a veteran professor of State-Arcana—perhaps such an one as Mr. Rose—rises now and then, bustling with all the pride of knowledge, and, by the aid of sagacious nods and mysteriously familiar tones, seems big with the secrets of a hundred Cabinets, and, though he tells little, looks as if he had much to tell; while he silences the voice of youthful reasoning, by triumphant allusions to those glorious days when the legislative Nestor was in his prime, and the theoretic youngster was yet unborn. All these traits are so natural to particular ages and habits, and if not quite harmless, are in general so free from maliciousness, that one is less disposed to be angry than to laugh at them; but there is another kind of conceit, betraying itself by a hard-faced and protrusive impudence, by a contemptuous and arrogant

over-bearing : to this let no mercy be shown ; it is so far from being a natural feature, that it requires whole years of the worst society and the worst education to engraft it with the least success, and then none but the worst natures will receive and propagate the corrupt addition. If this quality were as dangerous as it is vicious, it should be driven from society with execrations ; but like many of the most offensive vices, it carries about it its own antidote. It is an impostor which cheats only itself : it seduces its observer neither into pleasure nor admiration ; on the contrary, all are able to discover and appreciate its object, while some hate, and most despise it. Yet it succeeds, in general, as far as it aspires ; it wears its way, not wins it, and owes its greatness, not to the kindness of friendship, but to its own invincible importunity. It moves along, through the hisses of disgust and the mutterings of hatred, with perfect content, because it is conscious that such is the element most appropriate to its nature ; it takes its wished-for seat of rank with a shrug of contempt at those who would not pay the same price for the same dignity. It is very seldom however that impudence is ambitious ; it is

in general too sordid to aim after honorary distinctions, and confines itself to the search after gain ; hence it is less found in the political sphere (except among the underlings of state) than in the walks of common and daily life. There its most complete picture is to be seen, when a determined fortune-hunter has started a wealthy girl ; in vain she flies, in vain she despises, in vain she hates ; he looks upon all the struggles of resentment with the same calculating pleasure as a poacher views the strength-exhausting efforts of the captive bird, which tires itself into his possession. The poor girl, with all her loathing fresh about her, is, from the sex's characteristic inability to resist perseverance, compelled to yield, which it may be supposed she does with a sort of feeling like that with which a person flings himself into the sea, to avoid the approaches of a tiger, who will take no repulse. But I have been pursuing my remarks till I have forgot the purpose with which I began, which was merely to give a brief sketch of the Parliamentary peculiarities of the two gentlemen whose names are at the head of this article.

To begin with Mr. W. Pole ; he is, as I have

hinted, exceedingly self-important, though as in most cases of the sort, it would be almost impossible to discover on what grounds he fancies himself so momentous a personage. He has, indeed, for one brother, a statesman of considerable acquirements, and no mean understanding. He has, for another brother, a man whose simplicity of character excites general respect, and whose substantial services to the good cause entitle him to the gratitude of his country and mankind. Certainly Mr. W. Pole may justly congratulate himself on such a relationship; still I do not see how this circumstance is to explain his dignified self-opinion, when he can show neither the talents of one relative, nor the services of the other. His tone and manner make him nearly the most unpleasant speaker in the House. He is always angry, and his voice being sharp and shrill, and always raised to its highest pitch, grates on the ear a discord nearly as horrible as the tuning of five fiddles. One is at no time much disposed to sympathise with anger, even if just; least of all can we take any interest in a resentment which becomes louder in proportion to its want of cause, and lashes itself into a rage for no probable reason, unless it

has been medically recommended as a wholesome exercise of the physical powers. It is sometimes amusing to witness the intellectual spars between the two Ex-Chancellors of Ireland, Mr. Pole, and Sir J. Newport. The Baronet, though highly respectable for his independence, integrity, and general amenity of manners, is, however, more testy than seems a wise Statesman, especially when any reference is made to his administration :—and anger, as has been already observed, seems the element essential to the vitality of the other Legislator, who also piques himself in no small degree on the wisdom of his government. With such feelings it is not matter of surprise that the disputes of these opponents should sometimes be pushed even to exasperation ; while each of them, with his own peculiar eagerness, is insisting on his own infallibility, and the other's absurdity. The spectacle is the more entertaining, because the matter in debate is generally some local Irish law, which, however important, is yet almost always regarded by the House with the utmost indifference. Mr. W. Pole has, of course, received the education of a gentleman, and has been familiar with the best so-

ciety; yet I know not how it is, but there is more offensive obtrusiveness in his manner, and more meanness in his language, than are usually found in that class of life which is called genteel, unless indeed where the eminent rank or talent of the individual has precluded the necessity of compliance with accustomed forms. After all, this gentleman is of so little consideration in the state, that it may seem a waste of severity to descant on his character: I confess I feel so much tenderness for him for the sake of his family, that I could wish him to exercise the leisure which want of office affords, partly in cultivating his taste after the example of his elder brother, and partly in lowering the tone of his impatience, by studious reflection on the quiet unaffectedness with which his soldier brother performs illustrious actions.

The high tone of Mr. Croker may perhaps be explained with less difficulty: the writer of doggerel verses on the Dublin actors, and the puerile imitator* of the easiest of all models, Walter Scott, may reasonably feel some

* "The Battle of Talavera" is usually ascribed to Mr. Croker.

surprise at finding himself at so important a post as the Secretaryship to the Admiralty : having too little discrimination, or too much self-love to discover the real cause, he is led to conclude that he may possess great qualities, though unknown to himself, and that he should assume a consequence of manner equal to that latent dignity of character which is some day to be revealed. It must have contributed to spoil this gentleman, to see a man of Mr. Southey's eminence passing by all the rank and talent of the nation, to dedicate a rather favourite work to him : nor does one wonder that his gratitude should have made him the patron of the dedicating poet. The day, however, has been, and with a man of Mr. Southey's mutable thinking, the day may yet return, when a blush shall dart across the Laureat, to feel that, under such circumstances, he owes his honours to the patronage of such a person. It is usual with those who dislike this young Secretary—and he should know, what perhaps he is too careless to consider, that his manner is of all others the most calculated to make enemies—it is usual with them to object to the lowness of his origin. Such an objection, in a country like this, is

despicable and unnatural: it is the pride of our constitution that it opens the paths of honour for all who have skill to tread them; and a good Englishman should hail with joy every fresh instance of plebeian elevation. I rejoice, therefore, with Mr. Croker, that his origin has been no obstruction to his promotion; and indeed I feel some kindness for his father, if he is, as I have heard, the translator of the *Satires of Ariosto*. The translation is indifferent, and indeed it would be no slight task to render those elegant sketches of a Court's vices and a Poet's simplicity, with the Horatian point and delicacy of the Italian: but it is some praise to have been fond of such a work; and I would rather be the son of an indifferent versifier, than of a lazy, unlettered grandee. No—my quarrel with Mr. Croker is not on account of his pedigree, but for the arrogance of his manner, unbecoming in any man, but least of all suited to a man of his small pretensions. I object to that defying tone which seems to wish to provoke,—to that sore manner which implies a consciousness that what he says ought to offend, and therefore anticipates that anger as a shield, which it knows it merits to have di-

rected against itself as a weapon of offence. Luckily for Mr. Croker, few of the persons whom he attacks with such vehemence seem to hold it worth while to repel him : but a gentleman so exceedingly sensitive as the Admiralty-Secretary should be cautious never to utter a sarcasm unless he feels secure that, if answered, he shall have a repartee which will blow his adversary to pieces. Mr. Ponsonby, on one occasion, silenced him with a furious rebuff; and on another, Sir Francis Burdett, with his usual gentlemanly coolness, combined a few words whose united force seemed to sting to the very quick. Not however to leave this gentleman in despair—if he will cease to speak till he has conquered his high and irritable tone, and continue to discharge his office with his present exemplary diligence, he may justly look forward to as much praise as usually falls to the lot of second-rate officers of state. Meantime, let him continue to patronise poets; and may the next poet whom he befriends be able to receive the honour without any injury to the consistency of his character.

LORD MILTON AND LORD MORPETH.

IT is not my purpose to descant on so common a topic as the usefulness of a large and powerful body of Nobility to a Constitution framed like the English,—still less will I act so invidiously as to inquire by what title of desert they hold their several ranks and domains. Taking it for granted that in these respects all is as it should be, feeling at least that all is as it must be, I will turn aside from this dry and unprofitable task to the more amusing speculation of considering the general character of our English Nobles. And here I must express my pride as an Englishman, that in no country arrived at the height of civilization has existed an aristocracy less degraded by its vices, more beneficial by its virtues. I speak not here of the wretched creatures, whose poverty or whose low taste induce them to lick the dust of palaces: abject and imbecile, they have themselves abjured the rank to which they are conscious

they ought not to belong, and humanity rejects them as destitute of that principle, without which life is a burthen and a shame—an active and constant self-respect. The great mass of the English Nobility are a very different race, and bear about them more of the genuine English character than is to be found in any other class except the peasantry. The middle classes, including the merchants, the professions, and those cadets of rank who must make their way in the world, have all become so modified by reading, by thinking (I am loth to call it philosophy) and by intercourse with foreigners in various ways, that though they possess almost all the talent, and a great part of the virtue to be found, yet I think they have lost much of that peculiar manner and style by which their countrymen were distinguishable two centuries, or even one century ago. Whether that style and manner were good or bad, might be subject of deep contemplation with the philosopher: in his less wise and dignified moments, he might perhaps think that the mind of an Englishman is a soil too stubborn for metaphysics; that his heart has become contracted instead of expanded by the system of univer-

sal philanthropy ; that what has been gained in scientific prattle, has been lost in simplicity of understanding. He may even shake his head when he learns that our leading man of science is a little master who affects fashion, and that the oracle of the day who influences the education of half the people is a female, who has tamed the generous feelings of her sex and of nature into the admiration of a cold, calculating scheme, graduated by utility alone, and who by a patch-work fabric made up of one bit of Rousseau, another bit of Voltaire, a third of Darwin, proposes to enlighten and improve the future generation of men, by making them coxcombs and pedants. If, after all, the philosopher should admire this,—for philosophers must sometimes admire what they do not in their hearts approve,—yet the mere antiquarian lover of his country is not liable to the same obligation. He perhaps will cast his eye over past ages, and say “ We have had men of science and profound thinkers before to-day, yet Newton was no dangler after little Misses, nor Locke a spruce scented beau. We have had men of feeling : there were the two Sydneys, who have both written large books, yet they never recommend us

to love those ugly barbarians, the Chinese, with the same affection that is inspired by our own well-educated and well-looking relations. There have been female writers too, Mrs. Hutchinson, and Lady Russel, and Lady Fanshaw, but they were wise without 'vain philosophy,' and did not inculcate virtue by reference to the rule of three." Such might be the opposite opinions of different men: let the reader determine which of the two is right. I merely advance an opinion, that much of the characteristic manner here alluded to—call it spirit or pride, or good sense or obstinacy,—no longer distinguishes the great efficient body of the English people. Some of its features, somewhat disfigured, are to be found in the lower orders, who are insolently brave and sensible amid all the obstacles of prejudice. In the highest classes the features assume a more dignified mien: sullenness becomes independence, irritability is here spirit, and prejudice is wisdom looking through the spectacles of experience. Such features, it must be confessed, are rather interesting, as showing the genuineness of the breed, than amiable from their intrinsic grace;

and a nobility so marked may be thought to have but few claims to respect. Let not the reader be too hasty : it is better that a powerful aristocracy should be useful than pleasing : it is better that they should have the awkward reserve and sturdy honesty of farmers and mechanics, provided that they encourage agriculture and manufactures, than that they should manifest all the graces of Lovelace, and be known only at a concert or a masked ball. The manners indeed of our highest Nobility are in general very clumsy and unpolished : they are so educated as to meet with little acquaintance on the footing of an easy equality, and know scarcely any thing of the world till they are produced by their fine wives : they have not the intelligent confidence which is the result of the collision of able minds in a learned profession, nor have they substituted for it the graceful self-possession inspired by the habits and dangers of military life. They possess however what is better—a simplicity and straitforwardness of thinking, an abhorrence of meanness, an enthusiastic generosity, a fearlessness of danger, and a strong uncalculating admiration and

love of their country, which compensate all their faults, and make them the just boast of all who know how to appreciate them.

Among the most respectable of our noble houses is the family of Lord Fitzwilliam, whose son, Lord Milton, now claims our notice. To those who are in the habit of hearing this young nobleman there can be but one opinion of his character :—every one at once recognizes the warm feeling, the unsophisticated thinking, the earnest manner of an honest man : every body would be ready to exclaim of him : “ That man, I am sure, never did a cruel or a sordid thing : there is no trickery, no vice about him : conscious of right and fearless of consequences, he denounces wrong with the voice and gesture of a Censor : he puts no check to his language, because he holds that discretion worthless which would suppress the feelings of an unaffected indignation.” Such praise all would willingly give to this Nobleman ; and those who give so much would then be sorry that they could afford no more. Their impartiality, however, must compel them to confess, that with the excellencies his Lordship has many of the faults of the Aristocratical character. His

education has been scanty, his mind has no thinking: it is stored with many noble common-places, but he applies them without discrimination: he is exceedingly vain, and what perhaps more than any thing else tends to make a man thoroughly ridiculous, he has himself no apprehension of ridicule. Hence, he is ever pompous and exaggerating, almost with the air of mock-heroic; while his sombre look and unbending manner remind one more of the austerity of age than of the energy of eight-and-twenty. He is said to imitate Mr. Pitt: the copy is about as similar to the original as Ireland is to Shakspeare, or Dr. Trapp to Virgil. Such are his Lordship's defects, which I have mentioned with the same unreserve as that with which I have panegyrized his virtues. Upon the whole, his integrity and high honour, if properly directed, may render him an useful bulwark against state-corruption, and will ensure to him a continuance of that fond respect which is the attendant of his venerable Father.

Lord Morpeth, with equal claims to our regard on the score of virtue, is very superior in point of talent. His diffidence, however, is so great as almost to obscure his qualities; but an

attentive observer will see through the mist a strong and well cultured understanding,—a thorough knowledge of the subject which he undertakes to handle,—a tasteful and judicious proportion between the manner and the matter,—a liberality of thinking and a manly feeling. Here are qualities sufficient to make an orator of no trivial size: yet such is the overpowering modesty, or even bashfulness, of his Lordship, that those words and sentiments drop unimpressive from his tongue, which, from a more confident tone, would awe the House into respect, or rouse them to admiration. His Lordship is one of the Whig-phalanx, and may be considered as the least haughty and repulsive of that very disagreeable body of men. He has none of the offensive symptoms of his party—no rumbling dogmatism like Mr. Ponsonby, no majestic common-place like his friend Lord Milton, no pert sagacities like Mr. Tierney, no startling invective like Lord Grey. It is a pity that so amiable and right-minded a Nobleman should be known only as a coadjutor with a party:—it is for men like him to break the trammels and win a reputation for themselves, instead of being content

with the praise of constancy and fidelity. A zealous, independent man may effect more good, if only by his speeches, in one year, than the combined efforts of a selfish, tricking, small-minded party could achieve in fifty years.

MR. CREEVEY AND MR. BRAND.

I HAVE selected these Gentlemen as two of the most independent in the House of Commons. Each of them, no doubt, is ready to lend his utmost assistance to the Whigs in furtherance of any useful and important measure; but they are not the sworn advocates, the obsequious badgemen, of the party. Like Mr. Whitbread, if they think it their duty to make a proposition, they do not wait for the sanctioning nod of the Opposition-thunderer, nor do they seem to care very much whether their plan shall exactly correspond with the interested views of Messrs. A. B. C. and D., who, under existing circumstances, are of opinion, that the expedient should be mixed up a little with the right. Should they hold it necessary to oppose any of the schemes of the party, they instantly avow their dissent both by their speeches and their votes, without any of the reluctant delay of persons who suffer a duty to be made a question. It is possible that I may be mistaken in ascrib-

ing these high qualities to these gentlemen : I cannot help it ; I do not profess intuition : but it is their fault and their punishment, if they are not what they seem. For myself, I have not the least doubt of their sincerity, and will take occasion here to express my utmost scorn and abhorrence of that vulgar shallowness which would insinuate, that all public men are equally devoid of principle. Methinks I hear some ignorant whipster, half-terrified, yet entirely pert, interpose an objection.—“ Pray, Sir, do not you think that all public men are equally interested ? ” Yes, poor skeleton of half-formed experience ! I agree generally with your suggestion : but cannot you discern any difference between a noble and a sordid motive ? Is there no distinction between the man who, with a generous thirst for honourable advancement, or for that honest popularity which ever follow substantial merit, devotes his nights and days to the laborious service of the common-weal, and the wretch who is ready to alter his opinions at his patron’s signal, and who will barter away his manliness and his conscience for the sake of a pregnant sinecure, or even for the less solid honour of “ sitting in the King’s

Gate." To say that a man has an interest in what he does, is merely to say that an effect must have a cause. There never were and there never can be men who study stoicism so to the letter as to call, in a naked sense, Virtue its own reward. In a liberal construction the sentence no doubt is true : for certain advantages, such as esteem, friendship, tranquillity, are so inseparably connected with virtue as to form part of its very essence ; and a man who, though a king, seems to have been well acquainted with human nature, and who for the practical wisdom of his maxims better deserves the title of philosopher than half the doating commentators of Aristotle, has gone further, and said in the dashing style of the East, " that length of days is in her right hand, and in her left hand riches and honour." That servant unquestionably is most to be admired who will follow this glorious mistress with the smallest expectancies, and who will be content with her least compensations ; and it is in this sense only that any good man can be said to be disinterested. To descend a little to the application, I have always felt the greatest respect for the conduct of Mr. Creevey and

Mr. Brand, because it seemed as exempt from mere selfishness as human conduct can well be. Their occasional dissent from their party shows none of the pique of those disappointed seceders, whose " hopes long deferred have made their hearts sick." Their ample fortunes place them above all the paltry considerations of gain ; and they evidently have no ambition to shine as the leaders of a new sect, for their talents are not at all of the showy and imposing kind, and their pretensions seem exactly limited by their abilities. No motive then remains, except the laudable desire of pleasing their constituents, and of acquiring a just reputation among the intelligent and the upright.

With principles precisely similar, it is impossible for any two men to be more unlike in their manner of enforcing their opinions. Mr. Creevey is a complete picture of a blunt Englishman : careless and even slovenly in his address, shrewd and jocose in his expression, persevering and not to be repelled in his attacks : he puts one in mind of those sturdy puritans and country gentlemen of old time, who could shake even the arbitrary buckram of our Elizabeth and Charles : or, to

come lower, he is like that downright Shippen, who was such a torturing thorn in the flesh of Sir Robert Walpole. Mr. Creevey seems born to wrinkle the smooth smirks and ruffle the soft tempers of Administration, which is ever complacent and beaming the soul of polite tranquillity. When all about is Halcyon weather, and the Ministers are tripping along delicately, thinking that the bitterness of party-rage is past, on a sudden appears Mr. Creevey, like a dark cloud in June, and pours down upon them a pitiless pelting that overspreads all their faces with gloom, and drives them scampering for shelter to their benches and their offices. It is very amusing to see his method of punishing a forward self-love: the Minister proclaims some very plausible measure to which he professes he cannot anticipate the smallest objection: the House seems willing to be led, and the delighted Mover is going to congratulate them on an unanimity which does them so much honour. At this apparently auspicious moment, a quiet, conversational, half-serious, half-bantering voice is heard at the distance of the back benches: the proprietor of this ironical tone begs leave to say a very

few words : he is heard, and appears to be a man of a strangely-constructed memory, for he recollects every fault, and every blunder, and every failure of the Right Honourable Mover, and though evidently a very good-humoured pleasant fellow, he is so exceedingly unpolite as to doubt the propriety of implicit confidence in a Minister convicted of so many errors. What can the great man do ? Of course he despises the insinuation against his infallibility, but the speech has made some impression, and therefore some answer must be given. He rises, therefore, conceals his anger with a face of affected surprise, heaves two or three shrugs of regret, and expresses unfeigned astonishment at such an unreasonable opposition : he then casts round a look of mild appeal, and sits down. He of course carries his point, but the charm of unanimity is broken ; and the House which before felt perhaps unmixed respect, now cannot suppress a laugh at the awkward situation into which he has been thrust. It is but justice to Mr. Creevey to say, that his object in all this is something very superior to amusement ; he always seems to carry in mind his favourite principles and measures,

and will omit no opportunity of enforcing them, even though he may run the trifling hazard of being called uncourteous or unaccommodating.

Mr. Brand is the very opposite of this : he is all gentleness and courtesy. He is a Gentleman, with all the mildness and some of the reserve of the old school, and has the look of a man of the best fashion. I speak not of the beaux who waltz so divinely, though, for aught I know, Mr. Brand may waltz as well as any of them : I mean that his appearance expresses a consciousness of rank without insolence—a consciousness of pleasing, because he knows he possesses the means of pleasing,—and lastly, that benevolence which politeness can so well affect, but which seems to be a real ingredient of Mr. Brand's disposition and character. With all this, he is so unaffectedly modest and unassuming—while, at the same time, he evidently has all that well-founded self-respect which would repel an insult—that it is not easy to conceive a more prepossessing speaker, or one by whom the disengaged would more readily suffer themselves to be convinced. He possesses a very good understanding, which has been disci-

plined by a legal education: he discovers a good deal of the logical closeness of argument, and some of the learning of his profession. Fortunately, he is above the necessity of chaining himself down to a technical study to the exclusion of more useful duties; and, still more fortunately for his character, he shows as much industry and attention and perseverance to his objects as the merest adventurer in law or politics. Though a young man, who may therefore be reasonably supposed to have many more interesting pursuits, he is constantly on the spot, and is ever ready to open the door of Parliament to all who apply to him for advice or assistance. There is no man, next to Mr. Whitbread, in whose hands the Petitions of the poor or the injured can be deposited with more advantage. He will exert all his abilities to advocate their claims or their prayers, and none is likely to be heard with more success; for the House here, as always, pay the utmost deference to unimpeachable honesty and unaffected benevolence. Let this slight attempt to delineate a highly honourable character pass as a tribute of respect to one who, in his degree, does not yield in consideration

to any Member of either House, and who, though not gifted with eminent or commanding talents, possesses a power and usefulness which one should in vain look for among the expectants of Opposition or the minions of Administration.

THE CITY MEMBERS.

IT would be curious and entertaining, if any one had leisure for such an investigation, to take an historical survey of the fluctuations of civic importance: to see at one period the London counsels influencing the Parliament and the Nation; at another, to observe the good citizens entirely forgotten, or if remembered, remembered only for laughter. The causes of this it would be long to describe; but I believe it will generally be found that the consequence of the City has arisen in proportion to the turbulence of the times, and that when the nation has been perfectly tranquil, the voice of the Guildhall-conclave has been usually disregarded. The personal character of the City Representatives, or of the City Orators, does not appear to have increased or diminished its weight in the political scale: whether its remonstrances have been attended to or neglected, the reason of such observance or contempt must be

looked for, not in the eloquence or tameness of the diction, the good sense or emptiness of the arguments, but in the time, the circumstances, the probable results, of the address. For instance, a Minister finds he has a pretty firm hold of popular opinion : Opposition is content merely to look sullen or sneer : the friends of Government relax their importunities to be paid for voting according to their consciences. What has the Great Man now to fear ? His enemies know not how to attack him : his adherents dare not tease him. With what utter scorn then must he read the declamatiuncles of the Common Council, even though they should be backed in the House by the intelligence of a Barnard, the sagacity of a Wilkes, the energy of a Beckford. Even the unwieldy and gawdy majesty of the civic coach, which is sometimes such a portentous sight at the palace gate, will have no power to alarm him : it will strut to and from St. James's only regarded by the little ragged boys, who skip about it in recollection of the story of Whittington, and in the hope of being future Lord Mayors. He will hold his head on high, and " speak with a stiff neck : " and if a Representative of the

great City shall chance to cross his view, he shall stare with a look of faded memory, and bow with an air of unsmiling condescension. Now let some sudden accident derange his schemes, and the best laid schemes will go awry,—the Whigs—I beg pardon—the Opposition (but really one cannot well form an idea of the Whigs except as Oppositionists, for they are so litigious, that like John Lilburn, rather than be quiet, John will quarrel with Lilburn, and Lilburn with John)—the Opposition then begin to look wise and prophetic, and to give notices of troublesome motions. The Minister is now anxious for the support of the most insignificant : you may meet him or some of his aids-de-camp in almost every street : one hour you shall see him parading Pall-mall with a Peer who has but one borough ; the next, you shall catch him beaming the soul of good humour on the Exchange. In the House you never saw so mild a creature : look ! how he shakes that young briefless lawyer by his hand ! with what a smile he greets that superannuated General ! with what an obeisance of delighted respect he receives the invitation of that City Knight to his turtle-dinner ! Now is the time for a

City Member, or a City Address, to shake his soul with terror. And why? Not because he expects any extraordinary vigour of intellect, or unanswerable file of reasonings (these are obstacles which from his successful practice in the House he has been led to despise), but because the remote towns and counties will take their tone from London, and the cry will be up against him throughout the nation. People who live at a distance from the metropolis, and fancy that its wisdom is proportional to its opulence and magnitude, are proud to listen to its voice as to an oracle: they are not aware that the unanimous votes of Common Halls and Palace-yard Meetings do not speak the sense of one in ten of the inhabitants of the two great cities: they over-rate the abilities of the London Orators, and undervalue their own just pretensions, And yet, should any Country Gentleman, who has been seduced to hear the harangues at Guildhall, be inclined to give his real opinion, I have no doubt that he would say that they are far inferior to those which are delivered by Mr. A. and Sir John B. at the County Meetings. To take an instance—Mr. Waithman is a plain, sensible man, with some

information and more energy ; but no impartial judge would, I think, hesitate to place at least ten degrees above him such persons as Mr. Roscoe of Liverpool, or Mr. Elton of Bristol. It is not my purpose, however, to criticise the Common Council : I wish merely to give a brief delineation of the chosen four who have been deputed to guard the City's interests, and convey its wise decisions to the House of Commons.

The first and perhaps the most considerable is Mr. Alderman Combe : a gentleman of whom I am as unwilling as I am unable to say any thing derogatory : his consistency of conduct has ensured him the favour of his fellow-citizens, and the respect of all worthy men. Yet I must be allowed to regret that a man whose principles are so estimable cannot enforce them by any power of words, or of utterance. His delivery is so rapid, indistinct, and without a pause, that though I have heard him fifty times I would not swear to the authenticity of a single sentence. His speaking is like the writing of an uneducated girl—it has no punctuation, no stop, not even a comma. It puts you out of breath to listen ; and yet it seems to cost him no

effort. His face is all tranquillity, while his lips are precipitating, overthrowing, and destroying every word that passes them. It cannot be supposed that I conceive this trifling defect to be any serious drawback from the respectability of his character; it merely mars all effects which he might produce as a speaker. What a very different person is Sir James Shaw! Any one may see that he is a citizen and Alderman. How slowly and majestically the words march from his mouth: how impressive and solemn his enunciation! Not a particle escapes without an emphasis, and conjunctions and adverbs assume the dignity of moral axioms. How I should pity the Minister, if the matter of the Baronet were equal to his manner: for nothing short of the wisdom of Lord Bacon could be adequately and appropriately delivered in a style of utterance which, with mysterious portent, pauses between every word. The philosopher, whose words were sentences, might require such resting-places for the understanding; but he whose sentences are but words must not be allowed to consume so much of our time.—Ha! my good-humoured pleasant Sir, is that you? My ever-cheerful Sir William

Curtis, I am glad to see you! If I say one word against you, may I never partake of your hospitality! What, though the world, my good friend, is fond of retailing your blunders and gives you no credit for even common understanding; the world is ever mistaking: and I will undertake to tell it that no man in the City possesses more shrewdness and common sense, nor takes a juster view of common political squabbles. I will say that I know no man who, without affecting honesty and independence, is more substantially honest and independent. It is true that in all the greater questions which require extensive information and ampler views, you are no better than all the rest of the country-gentlemen and citizens, who think it safer to support the government than to sanction a speculation which they cannot understand. Nay—you frown—you are ungrateful: I have really said of you as much as you deserve, and shall expect to hear you acknowledge it when you are in better humour after dinner.

Of Mr. Alderman Atkins I know very little, and shall not therefore pretend to say much. He seems a sensible man, and is very well informed on mercantile questions: he

expresses his thoughts with sufficient fluency, and in a tone tolerably free from affectation or importance. - He was a member some time before he represented the City, and from his experience and judgment is an excellent Chairman in private Committees. He generally votes with the Ministry, but I am not aware, at least at present, that this circumstance at all diminishes his respectability.

Upon the whole, the City Members seem nearly as good as they have ever been: there is not indeed among them any man with the extensive knowledge and sound vigorous understanding of Sir John Barnard. But such a man is not to be found every day: Mr. Baring comes the nearest to that eminent merchant, but unfortunately his hesitating delivery destroys more than half his power. The City, however, may congratulate itself, that if its representatives want commanding talents, yet they are not factious like Pilkington, nor mulish like Crosby, nor impudent like Beckford, nor profligate like Wilkes.

SIR WILLIAM SCOTT.

A MAN, fond of revolving his country's history, will see in it no feature to which he will more often and more proudly recur, than the wisdom and integrity of its most distinguished citizens. Its extended territory and accumulated riches may dazzle his imagination; its invincible heroes, and their "well-foughten fields," may stir his heart like the sound of a trumpet; but the impression in each case will soon fade away, while the image of silent and useful virtue shall take a hold of the mind, which can only be loosened when the understanding itself shall be perverted or destroyed. Something may perhaps depend on the age of the observer: boys and girls will never be able to look on any thing with the admiration which is excited in them by the gorgeous array and romantic bravery of a preux chevalier; the Black Prince or St. Bayard, in their eyes, will surpass a dozen Sir Thomas Mores or De L'Hopitals. But let

these same boys and girls grow into men and women, and the case is soon altered : the bodily virtues sink to their proper degree on the scale, and the intellectual virtues assert their due eminence. The reader will easily anticipate me as to the reason of this : when we are young and weak, nothing appears so imposing as the exertion of great bodily power—nothing so over-bears the mind which is conscious of inability to resist its efforts : we grow older and stronger, and courage and self-confidence increase with our strength : we feel that we could almost do the feats which we admire, and our admiration begins to die away. For it is a curious property of self-love, that though it will doat on any particular quality belonging to the favourite object, it can hardly extend a glance of regard to the same virtue, if possessed by another. Increase of years, however, will not diminish our veneration for the qualities of mind ; and wisdom and virtue in their highest degree are so rare, that our conscious inferiority is never lessened : the habits of common life seem at such a distance from the attainment of them, that we seem to see either that they are not a-kin to the native properties of the soul, or

that they are too much beyond our reach to be regarded with other feelings than those of veneration. But placed as they are out of the sphere of common men,—even common men love to contemplate them for their beauty and their usefulness,—the poor peasant, who knows not whether the sun is bigger than it appears, nor whence it comes nor whither it goes, yet hails its presence with awe-struck gratitude, and blesses every ray that fertilizes his fields. Enlightened men feel still greater pleasure : they comprehend at once the motive and the end, and are profoundly moved with that simplicity and moral grandeur by which some few chosen minds seem to approach (I speak I hope not irreverently) even the divine intelligence, as exemplified in its creation. For what closer analogy can be found than between the majestic march of the solar system, day after day performing its silent duty and shedding abroad its unknown but beneficial influences, and the quiet progress of the good wise man, whose daily task and scheme it is to benefit mankind, and whose services extend to thousands who are even ignorant of his existence. Here it is that we see the loveliness, as well as the greatness of intellectual virtue,

compared with military excellence. The former requires no caparisoned horses, no deafening drums, nor stunning artillery to announce its victories: such parade would only debase its simple dignity, as who would not pity Apollo thrust into the Lord Mayor's coach. But better still: it is not forced to proclaim its energy by devastation, and to improve half mankind by destroying the other half: it disdains the ruffian impatience which kills while it pretends to cure; it finds the remedy for moral evils in awakening the capabilities of man, and not in the bungling savage method of prostrating and debasing him into a slave. Before the soldier walks Fear, and behind him Misery and Oppression: the good man's march is preceded by Hope, and followed by the Rights of Man and the domestic Virtues. Now let any man choose which he will follow,—the conqueror or the sage? and let him that hesitates be doomed to join the banners of tyranny and destruction. What is here said can only be applied in its full extent to a very few persons: but allowing proper limitations, it may generally be observed that the lowest exertion of intellect is more respectable than the most careful com-

binations of brute force, which seems to require only two or three of the simplest ideas. The writer of the worst epigram that ever fell pointless from a pen, is superior, in my estimation, to the cleverest pugilist ; even a tolerable sonnet demands, I think, more understanding than to be the adroitest parade-officer that ever brandished a cane, General Mack himself not excepted : but the author of a good poem, or of a treatise calculated to enlighten mankind, is preferable to the whole collection of heroes from the remotest times to the present day, beginning at Sesostris and ending with Buonaparte. It is time for intellect to assert its rights, and not to suffer the noisy sons of violence, who in turn kill and are killed by each other, to monopolize that fame which belongs by justice only to the wise and the virtuous.

Among the men of cultivated understanding who have directed their powers to the public service, it would not be easy to find one who has brought more natural and acquired energies into action than Sir William Scott. I must here, however, premise that, as he but seldom appears in Parliament, what is said of him applies rather to his judicial than

parliamentary character, though with this explanation it may with equal justice be declared of both. His understanding is acute and inquisitive, and full of that excellent quality, good sense, by which the mind is enabled to detect imposition, and to stand firm against the violence of enthusiastic declamation: it is also ambitious and comprehensive, never content with picking its way through small details, but seizes at once the whole subject matter with all its possible appendages, conscious that it can manage it all with the easiest mastery, arranging every compartment, and dove-tailing every joint. Besides this, his mind is stored with the best ancient and modern learning, philosophical, polite, and technical; and the whole is corrected and adorned with the finest taste. So gifted and so improved, he is a person to whom it would be difficult to find a parallel, even on the bench of English judicature, though that bench has been frequently adorned with the most learned and accomplished men. Lord Coke is so mere an unique, that it would be ridiculous to compare him with any living thing, unless indeed he would come to earth and furnish me with one of his own ludi-

crous and inimitable similes. The mind of the great and good Sir Matthew Hale was disfigured with bigotry, and perhaps with ostentation, though certainly not to the extent which that contemptible creature North would insinuate in his life of Lord Guilford. Lord Somers was an honest man, of various and extensive learning, and with a very elegant taste: but he showed, occasionally, an infirmity of mind that corresponds but too accurately with that unhappy depravation of his intellect that visited his latter years. One cannot help smiling at an expression in one of his letters to King William, who had written to him for an explanation of some parts of his conduct, which the Parliament were about to criminate. The affrighted Nobleman mistook the derangement of fear for some other cause, and, writing from Tunbridge, tells the King, that the waters of the place have so discomposed his thoughts that he finds himself unable to furnish the required communication. Next to these, and in some respects greater than these, was Lord Mansfield, a man who at one time was the idol of all parties, and who even to the last, and in the midst of political animosities, retained the admiration of his ene-

mies. He possessed a more extended fame than usually falls to the lot of a lawyer: yet I think that, judging solely from the books of Reports, no man could fairly say that any one of them could fairly be put on an equality with some of those masterly interpretations of the law of nations, which are reported to have come from the lips of Sir William Scott. There is one judgment, and on a different subject, which strikes me as the finest combination of well-digested learning and elegant taste that can be found in the range of our literature. It is the decision in the case of *Dalrymple and Dalrymple*, where he has thought proper to discuss the whole doctrine of Scotch marriages, as well as to reason on the particular facts of the transaction laid before him. The quantity of reading there displayed is, perhaps, no more than should be expected from every Judge; but who else could have distributed it with a skill which enforces conviction, and alone amounts almost to eloquence? Who else could have supplied the deep thinking and discriminate view of human character? Who else could have handled the nicer parts of the subject with a delicacy from which the purest mind would

not shrink? To speak a little of his Parliamentary conduct: he is a decided enemy to the claims of the Catholics, and this no doubt, with many, detracts much from the enlargement of his understanding. The Catholic Question, though not to be treated as some affect to treat it, as the easiest and the most a matter of course of any thing in the world, certainly does seem one on which it is difficult for enlightened men long to doubt. I wish too well to that cause to go out of my way to explain and justify a conduct which is so positively hostile: but it is only justice to Sir W. Scott to observe that his perseverance is not that of a vulgar bigot. He takes higher ground, and seems to think that the predominant party in a state should not suffer another to rise to sufficient strength to be able to conflict with it for the superiority. The reasoning may perhaps be correct, but the fear, on which in this case it is founded, seems entirely visionary, and arises probably from early habits and prejudices. Perhaps as he owes his elevation to the present system (though indeed such a man must have risen under any system), he may view innovation with distaste, and cling to the existing order.

from mere gratitude. "I am aware that this concession will open a thousand mouths against me. "What! (I hear them exclaim) is your enlightened man degraded by the commonest prejudices of the commonest men?" This question admits a very extended answer, but I shall content myself with a very short one: "Yes, gentlemen, it may be so: and now make the most of the concession: deduct from his intellect all that even your anger shall think ought to be deducted on this score; and when you have so done, I will defy you to produce,—nor do I say this in spleen, for I am your friend,—but I defy you to produce in the ranks of your champions one who, even after these deductions are made, possesses so comprehensive and so enlightened a mind."

I have hinted that there is some timidity in his character, and in this, as in some other points, he resembles his able brother, Lord Eldon. It was a pitiable weakness, and should operate as a warning, that a man of his eminence should, by a mistake, have been frightened into a sort of compromise of his character, by giving money to prevent a disclosure: he should have known that the public are ever

willing to view the actions of their wise and useful servants with candour and respect : and it would not readily recollect the man who has discharged the duties of a worthy citizen with more dignified and constant utility than Sir W. Scott. He began life as the tutor of his College, and his many improvements, together with his superior style of instruction, are still remembered there with gratitude and respect. He then became an active and learned Advocate, and has since presided in two Courts with an ability that has been equally serviceable to his country and to his own fame : for his name is not confined to this island, but is as much respected abroad as at home. He is now old, but he has lived long enough for glory : and whenever he passes away, he will leave a memory equally venerable for talents, integrity, and services done to the state ; and, as far as I have ever heard, unsullied with one considerable stain.

DR. DUIGENAN AND GENERAL MONTAGU
MATHEW.

THERE are some men who, like the Marplot of Comedy, seem fated to injure every cause which they befriend: they blunder on with such pertinacity and blindness, that correction or advice are equally useless: they persist in showing their cruel kindness with such a ludicrous unconsciousness of their stupidity and their mischief, that the very person who is smarting under the effects of their *etourderie* is compelled to laugh. Strangers, who hear these people profess friendship, and see its hurtful consequences, who hear their exceeding ardour for the party which their efforts make completely ridiculous, are apt generally to feel more indignation than merriment; they take these blunderers for treacherous friends or cunning adversaries. This is not a fair judgment, nor founded on deliberation: those who give it are little aware of the possible obtuseness of the human intellect, or of the effect of prejudice on an unenlightened self-love.

Thus I have heard some of these illiberal judges protesting that nothing shall persuade them that Dr. Duigenan is not in his heart the friend of the Catholics, and that with the refined skill of a master-advocate, he holds that the best way of defending their cause is to make the Protestant arguments against it a standing jest. They say that he is a man of considerable learning, especially on this particular question: that of course he must be acquainted with all the strong parts of the subject: yet they contend that he invariably brings forth to the battle the same feeble, tattered forces, which have been beaten and re-beaten till even the victors are weary. They go farther, and try to strengthen their position by an allusion to the Doctor's private life, and say that he has chosen for the partner of his thoughts, the solace of his domestic hours, a lady, who is one of the unhallowed family of Anti-Christ. But to this theory, plausible and amusing as it is, I must, in justice to Dr. Duigenan, refuse my assent: for to begin with the last argument, it does not follow because the Doctor is a very sturdy logician, that he is equally strong on the score of the passions; since the days of Thomas Aquinas, the very sternest ratiocinators (one

must not call these people reasoners) have found it much harder work to conquer the fascinations of a beautiful woman, than to over-master the most artful syllogism. I am sure I shall never glory in the defeat of the Doctor who was beaten under such circumstances: the failing was quite human, and I was never one of those who believed the Doctor to be super-human, a belief which I understand is losing ground quickly, even among the most zealous of the benefited clergy. The Doctor may comfort himself somewhat in the strain of the young rakes in Terence and Aristophanes, who justified their errors by reference to the character of Jupiter: so he may say, "What? did the angelic Doctor nearly fall a victim to the devil himself in the shape of a woman? and shall I, a simple Doctor of Laws, be considered unpardonable because I have been vanquished by a female, who, even according to the harshest interpretation, is only a lineal descendant of the co-adjutrix of the devil?"* Indeed giving him

* A reference to the Revelation, with the comments of any of the old Protestant Controversialists, will explain this allusion, if it need any explanation.

full credit for his sincerity, I feel some respect for him, that he has not received any shock in his opinions from the assault of so close an enemy, for supposing, which I will most readily, that the lady is one of the discreetest of her sex, yet surely she may sometimes just hint a little fragment of a dislike at his violent opposition to her sect: such as, "My dearest Doctor, how can you say such severe things against our great grand-fathers and great grand-mothers, who really never offended you in any manner of way." The Doctor, however, is evidently impregnable, and is determined to abominate the Catholics of the 13th and 14th centuries. And this brings one to another part of the theory, where it is assumed that the Doctor is a friend to the Catholics because he constantly adduces such weak arguments against them. His arguments, it must be confessed, are not very strong; and his syllogisms might be unravelled by a boy. He assumes that the Catholics are the vilest and most perfidious wretches in the world: he asserts, that it would be madness to allow any equality between these worst of mankind and the best of mankind—the best of mankind, beyond all doubt, are the Protestants—

he concludes with a triumphant *ergo*, that there can be no equal privileges between the Catholics and Protestants. I cannot stop to refute this jargon, but shall merely observe that, when Dr. Duigenan speaks of Catholics, he is so exceedingly cautious, as never to descend nearer to the present times, than by a century. Three or four centuries ago, they were (he argues) the monsters of the earth: lately, to be sure, they have been in many instances no small lights and ornaments among mankind; but then this goodness is all pretence, 'tis a mere blind to deceive the Protestants into the concession of their claims: then they will throw off the mask and revel again in their iniquity. It seems hardly possible that the understanding of man should admit such reasoning, and yet I firmly believe that the Doctor conscientiously holds these opinions. He does not seem to have apprehension and skill enough to build a good joke: his mind is of a small compass, fitted with only one species of knowledge, and disciplined in all the dull sophistry of old divines and old jurists. A powerful intellect, if entangled in such toils, must make no common effort to break them; but a small mind,

inured to twenty or thirty years of such slavery, has not the inclination, much less the vigour, to snap a single thread of the net in which it is a happy prisoner. There is in the whole a not unpleasing consistency about his *tout ensemble*: brief and sturdy in his person, limited and tenacious in his thinking, antique in his manners and his opinions, he is at once particular and uniform; but with all his eccentricities, I never see him rise without pleasure, because I consider him as being, though no doubt unconsciously, one of the best friends whom the Catholics can boast.

I wish I could say the same of General Mathew: he shews indeed all the characteristic fervour of his countrymen in favour of the cause of the Catholics, but at the same time evinces a blindness of blundering greater than even foolish illiberality ever ascribed to his nation. Why does he, with the experience of two or three parliaments before him, persist in thinking that the cause can be gained by violence, when he must know that the violence of the other party is as ten to one? Can he not see that most of the powerful friends who have acceded to his side have been won over by mildness and candour? Let

him look to Mr. Grattan, a man whose soul may reasonably be supposed to be engrossed by a cause for which he has fought so long, and which is to connect his name with his country, through the countless series of future ages? May he live to ensure his triumph! Does that Gentleman ever show any irritable intemperance? has he lost one incipient friend by furious zeal? has not the cause gained fresh proselytes every year from the influence of that enlarged understanding, which insinuates and does not force its precepts, where force would be at once nugatory and hateful? General Mathew, to be sure, is a much younger man, but he is much too old I should think to choose to have his mistakes palliated on the score of youth. "He is a soldier and not a statesman:" well then, let him thunder at the head of his regiment; but before he goes, I must ask him, whether even as a military man he would attempt to take every fortified place by a *coup de main*. If he shall think himself more fitted to shine in the senate than the field (and a very gallant Naval Officer has shown how easy it is for a brave but injudicious man to make such a mistake), I must give him one other piece of advice;

and as he seems a very good-natured kind-hearted man, I have some hope that he will take it in good part. Like his friend Mr. Christopher Hutchinson, of noisy and independent memory, he seems very much disposed to take every man for a fool or a rogue who shall happen to differ from him in opinion : if the man be a Minister, he must be both. "No good can come from the Treasury Bench," seems with him an axiom, and with the help of two or three more such assumptions, which he takes as first principles, he will in a trice build up a theoretic proposition, from which it shall incontrovertibly appear that nothing was ever so atrocious as the present or any given Ministry. He must correct these errors of prejudice and impetuous feeling, and then he will be no contemptible aid to his party. When these rude excrescences are worn down, his tall strong person, his powerful voice, and animated, though rather violent gesture, will give no small effect to the out-pourings of a very honest heart : for the House of Commons has still so much of the good old English character left, that it never fails to sympathize with the eloquent energy of unaffected passion.

MR. ROBINSON AND MR. PEEL.

THERE is always in the House of Commons a large stock of young men with promising talents and tolerable industry, who are kept up by successive Ministers, in order to furnish the country with a perpetual supply of Statesmen. The method of raising and educating this useful class is exceedingly simple. The Minister looks about among his relations, friends, and adherents, for those lads who have pride enough to wish to improve their circumstances by regular exertion, instead of wasting their small incomes in idle extravagance. Among these he selects such as have some smartness and more gravity, who are too conceited to be easily abashed, but too prudent to neglect the means of knowledge within their reach, who have just so much power of language as suffices to explain the principles of a bill on sail-cloth or tobacco, and who on extraordinary occasions will compose and learn by rote an elaborate

declamation, which may serve to open an important debate, as in war the skirmishing of light troops precedes the conflict of the main contending armies. The time for seizing these youths and drilling them for the State's use is when they have left the university about a couple of years: if taken earlier, they become restive and unmanageable, and seldom arrive at any steady service; for their heads are so full of their academical honours, obtained for writing pointless epigrams in imitation of Martial and Sapphic odes in the Attic dialect, that they look down on all the rest of mankind as an eagle views the crows flying some fathoms below its own elevation. A judicious Minister therefore waits till the youth is sobered into a less opinion of himself, either by an association with superior intellects, or by a conviction forced upon his experience, that his sister, who can build an acrostic from the phrases and rhymes of Pope, is quite as extraordinary a being as the collegian who patches together a lyric ode from a hundred different bits stolen from the treasures of Horace. At this moment, with their minds partially humiliated yet not abased, and with a newly-excited ambition springing from this

very discovery of their own boyish errors, they are in the fittest possible state to submit themselves to the drudgery of an Under-Secretary's desk, and to go through all the tedious process which is to qualify them for future places in the middle of the Treasury Bench. Their business is neither very difficult nor very dignified. They go to their offices at a good early hour, read, write, talk, and yawn till three o'clock; then breathe the air for a short time in the park, then walk down to the House with an especial care to be there by four o'clock, that public business may not be delayed for want of sufficiency of Members, then move some of the ordinary matters of the day, then (if necessary) answer the objections of any Member who is of too little importance for the Minister's personal notice, and then (if no division is expected) they may depart and visit as many dowagers, and dance with as many cousins as they please, remembering however with due caution, that they be punctually in their places on the succeeding morning. These are the men who in due time become themselves Ministers of State, and preside over the war, the commerce, and the police of the country :

from this class also are sometimes taken the envoys and ambassadors, who, in addition to the accomplishments before-mentioned, are required to possess a competent knowledge of French, a gentlemanly appearance, and an invincible reserve. It is very useful that this breed should be encouraged, that there may be always a supply of hands capable of managing the machinery of the state: as to the great leading mind which should direct the whole, this is not often to be found in this technical school: though, to tell the truth, I know not where else we may search for it. Let us not however despair; for this happy country, among its many other inestimable advantages, has generally been so lucky as to be blessed with a succession of heaven-born ministers, who have been able to do every thing by intuitive wisdom.

This general description must be understood as applicable to the whole class, rather than particularly to the two gentlemen whose names are at the head of this article: the first of whom, Mr. Robinson, is so exceedingly above the ordinary mediocrity of his fellow-apprentices in the art of government, that he must be considered more as an exception than

a part of the system. I am not going to claim for this gentleman the honours due only to first-rate talents, but I am sure that there are several persons who are admired in the Commons as master-builders in state-science, and whose voices guide whole flocks, who, however, at the same time, have not half the knowledge, half the good sense, or half the taste of Mr. Robinson. He is the most promising and the least assuming of all the young aspirants: he scarcely ever puts himself forward, but whenever he speaks in confirmation of the arguments or the statement of his superior officers, it is impossible not to feel some surprise that one who ought to be in the principal ranks should still be confined to the second. His narration and his reasoning are remarkable for perspicuity and point, and if, now and then, it falls to his lot to declaim on any of the more important topics which occupy the attention of Parliament, he never fails to interest the House by an unaffected animation of style, which seeks no aids from fustian or coxcomical antithesis. Indeed, his distinguishing feature is a well-instructed good sense, by which, on all occasions, he is enabled to accommodate his tone

and diction to the importance of his subject with the most pleasing nicety of proportion. Unlike the rest of the young men, who always assume the most dignified looks and the most solemn tones, even when they bring up a report of a committee, Mr. Robinson seems to have no taste for mock-pomp. On a common subject his tone is conversational, though never flippant: on a great subject, he can rise to the proper height without laborious straining. Lord Castlereagh showed his usual correct judgment in selecting this gentleman as the partner of his continental expedition; for hereafter, when the details of his labours shall be laid before the House, he will have a most able coadjutor in his young companion. His Lordship has never been celebrated for the distinctness of his narratives, and we may reasonably suppose that his intercourse with foreign diplomatists will not tend much to simplify his style, either of thinking or speaking; and here the help of Mr. Robinson will be at once necessary and certain. He will unravel the most intricate arrangements with the utmost facility, and, by the force of a diction at once clear and elegant, will impress his ideas on others with the same vivid ac-

curacy with which they appear to his own mind.

Mr. Peel is by no means so agreeable or so able a person. He has all the appearance of a young man spoiled by excessive flattery. He was enlisted too soon into the public service, and had not passed those two years of probation which I have ventured to think so requisite for juvenile politicians. Hence he has all the habits of a pert academic, who thinks a smart joke (if it be his own) equivalent to a weighty argument, and an apt quotation a death-blow even to an undisputed fact. He is unquestionably a youth of quick parts, and can sharpen his sentences with a great deal of that clever point, which is a common and sure result of an intimate acquaintance with the *style* of classic authors. But Mr. Peel, though he is what is usually denominated a scholar, shows very little knowledge of any thing besides the *style* of the ancients; for I never heard from him any sentence imbued either with the energetic thinking or the deep feeling of those noble masters of all literature. The House, which as I have often mentioned is always kind and indulgent to the efforts of beginners, must frequently have occasion to

regret its exceeding courtesy. It scarcely exercised any severity when this Gentleman, in the carelessness of young wit, presumed to assault one of the most venerable characters of the age: the lenity shown on that occasion (unless Mr. Peel has a strong corrective good sense in reserve, which he has not yet exhibited) may lead to even more offensive specimens of an over-humoured pertness. Let us hope better; and that he will either improve himself by a severe self-examination, or look out of himself for a respectable model: for such an exemplar he need go no farther than Mr. Robinson.

MR. ROSE.

THERE prevails among men of taste a pretty strong objection against burlesques and travesties of works of beauty, and yet Nature herself affords some authority for this species of humour. Who can see the important clumsiness of the goose, and not immediately recognize a striking parody of the easy majesty of the swan? Who can help observing that the rascal crow, when he is insolently strutting along the corn-field, means by his mock-dignity to imitate the proud march of the peacock. The Scarrons and the Cottons may justly appeal to this natural phænomenon as an excuse for their style of composition, and may even claim credit for the justness of its principles. There is, however, another class of burlesque-imitators, who are not entitled to the same consideration: they are dull, unconscious humourists, who travesty all that is wise and excellent, and fancy that they are merely

copying to the life : dwarfish and deformed, they put on the dress of the tall and graceful, and expect to be equally admired : ignorant and inapprehensive, they adopt the profound sentences of experience and philosophy, and hope to be venerated for their blundering misapplications. Society is full of these people : creatures who, having no basis of individual character, are made up of appendages, borrowed from a hundred quarters ; one man, for instance, is composed of Lord A.'s wig, of Lord B.'s frown, of Lord C.'s utterance, of Mr. D.'s shrewd looks, and of Mr. E.'s freezing gravity. Another solemn coxcomb will mouth out a torrent of unintelligible verbiage, and call it an imitation of Mr. Pitt. Another pertling stammers out some rude, incoherent, abrupt observations, and believes that he is representing the simple energy of Mr. Fox. Sometimes a forward youth pours out a dull malignity, and hopes to obtain that praise which is due only to the graceful sarcasm of Mr. Sheridan. It would be gross injustice to Mr. Rose, to confound him with these persons who condescend to borrow all their features from their contemporaries : he has made a more ambitious

choice, and has gone into the remotest ages of antiquity for the model by which he forms himself. The smooth prattle, the never-varying egotism, and the important air of an ever-ready memory, which are such prominent traits in the character of old Nestor, are all parodied in the person of Mr. Rose, with an accuracy which at once exhibits the acuteness and facility of his faculties. Like Nestor, he is always in his place: like Nestor, he is always talking; and, like Nestor, he is never listened to. Like Nestor, he is very religious, and appeals to Heaven for the truth of most of his assertions; though in this case, besides the piety, there seems a perfect propriety in point of taste; for as he is perpetually referring to times before the present race of Ministers and great men were born, he is of course detailing facts and circumstances, the truth of which, according to vulgar phraseology, Heaven only knows. Indeed, even in instances which have happened within the recollection of present politicians, he sometimes manifests considerable inaccuracy, a defect which will immediately and most justly be ascribed to the vast heaps of materials which are stored up in his mind. He

has passed, I believe, the greater half of a long life in office, and in the minute details of it : no wonder then that the multiplicity of his occupations has left him no time for arranging his facts, and depositing them in those different snug little cabinets of the brain, which have been discovered by the ingenuity of metaphysicians. It is to be lamented that his want of leisure to perform this useful office should have been productive of some inconvenience. It has put him into the situation of a traveller who has visited all the places of the habitable globe ; yet having forgot or not having opportunity to keep a journal, he afterwards in his narrations confounds Otaheite with the Great Desert, or the capital of Turkey with the capital of England. Thus it happens that this Gentleman, though of the highest respectability, of acknowledged industry and enlarged experience, scarcely gains as much attention as the showy youngster, who without ever sitting at an Under-Secretary's desk, ventures to prate about the details of public affairs. Even the Ministers support his observations with a coldness which is strangely ungrateful to so old and useful a

servant : in one instance * Lord Castlereagh, though the pink of courtesy, absolutely contradicted his colleague : and if one may judge by appearances, Mr. Rose is not even now on confidential terms with those who sit on the same bench with him. It cannot be matter of surprise that this faithful servant should feel himself much hurt by such indifferent treatment : indeed, many years ago, he complained that Mr. Pitt did not notice him half so much as his fellow-secretary Mr. Steele, a person who does not seem to have been a very eligible friend for a Minister ; for, besides his want of industry and talent, it appears that his notions of property were so confused that he mistook some hundred thousand pounds of the public money for his own. People will naturally ask, why is he treated with so little consideration ? Are his manners repulsive : Not at all ; quite the contrary : you never saw a milder old Gentleman ; like his prototype Nestor, he speaks words sweet as honey, except indeed on those occasions which inevitably rouse an honest man's anger, when he suspects any imputa-

* In a debate last year on the Catholic Question.

tion on his conduct. I apprehend indeed that, conscious of his very superior information, having outlived two or three generations of Ministers, he is apt to proclaim his knowledge in a tone which inferiority cannot brook: besides this, having made no doubt a very correct estimate of his own important services, and having that just admiration of the golden rule of three, which is so excusable in a man who has passed all his life in calculation, he perhaps is importunate to receive that proper compensation which may appear immense to those who are not aware of the multiplying power of common figures. I must however allow that this is mere conjecture, and that I cannot support it by a single fact. I appeal, however, with confidence to philosophers, whether it be not a just inference from the usual principles of our nature.

The House in general do not seem to like Mr. Rose much better than he is liked by his colleagues—but there is an evident reason for it: he represses the warmth of juvenile declamation by quoting a speech or precedent of old time, or stifles in its birth the darling scheme of some ardent projector, by protest-

ing that it is contrary to the practice of twenty sessions. All this too he does with that mild dictation and smiling undertoned manner, which, though it bears to the ignorant the mark of perfect amiability, is to the quick-sighted the most insolent assumption of superiority.

Mr. Rose, however, may console himself for the neglect of Ministers and the indifference of Parliament, with the proud consciousness of his superior knowledge, which it is to be hoped he will publish for the good of posterity. Such a book would be an excellent companion for Dodington's Diary, with this exception, that one is the journal of a contemptible courtier, and the other will be the recollection of an honest Servant of the public, for so Mr. Rose thinks himself, and on, no doubt, the most logical grounds. Mr. Rose may also console himself, if not with a peerage which he is said to wish, yet with the reflection that he is one of the richest commoners of the land, and that his wealth has been the accumulation of the deserved wages of office, increased by that very rigid œconomy which is so salutary an ex-

ample in high life, and which is particularly desirable in a man who is appointed to preside over a large portion of the treasury of the country.

MR. YORKE AND MR. STEPHEN.

MANY readers perhaps may ask with surprise, why I associate two Gentlemen between whom there appears to be no sort of political connexion, and who are by no means conspicuous for similarity of opinion. It is because, independently of their sentiments on public matters, I imagine that I perceive in them some striking coincidences, both in their excellences and defects. There is about each of them a sincerity of manner, which is equally heedless of committing itself, or of offending a third person; a tone of decision which shows that the mind is compactly made up on the given subject; and an air of dogmatical defiance, which holds all contrary notions as mere idle words. All this too is accompanied with an exceeding warmth, which frequently defeats the best purposes by affording the adversaries an opportunity for ridicule, or by provoking them into a temper which will not be convinced. In

these general traits they appear to me to resemble each other : each of them, however, is distinguished by marked individual features. With respect to Mr. Yorke, I believe it would be no exaggeration to call him one of the very best-intentioned men in the House : he so evidently wishes to be right, and his feelings are so just, that one cannot help lamenting the niggardliness of nature which has left so promising a composition incomplete by withholding the higher qualities of intellect. *Bonum virum facile dixeris, magnum libenter.* His understanding is sound and manly, and well instructed ; but it has not the grasp nor the pliability requisite to comprehend the whole of a subject. What he sees he sees with the utmost clearness, but he sees only a little way. Like the artist spoken of by Horace, he can make a hand, a foot, or an eye, with the utmost accuracy : but he cannot compose a whole body, with all its infinite and harmonizing varieties. It may be thought unfair to compare this Gentleman with the highest standards of human excellence, especially as he has never manifested any inordinate pretensions. Perhaps it would be more just to take him as he is, and not to

descant on what he might be: yet when a person possesses that very high claim to our esteem, perfect integrity, it is difficult not to wish that he had been endowed with those grand intellectual attributes which make virtue not only more admired but more useful. Indeed, where there is not an unison of high moral and mental excellence, we can never rely on the consistency even of the purest heart. Unprincipled philosophy has shed torrents of blood; unenlightened benevolence has condemned even innocence to the flames. In matters of smaller moment there will be, without this union, an incongruity of conduct amounting almost to absurdity. For instance, from what other cause can it arise that Mr. Yorke, though a sincere lover of the Constitution, and ready, I have no doubt, to make larger sacrifices for it than many a reputed patriot, has on one or two occasions set his face against some of the best privileges of Englishmen! He thought he was acting right, no doubt: but could he have thought so, had his mind been as enlarged and liberal as his heart is pure. Mr. Yorke is in the main a very candid man, and, one may venture to assert, is as incapable of

political as he is of private animosity : yet why has he more than once branded as jacobinical and pernicious, sentiments which have been avowed by the best of men ? He was alarmed, and cried out, because he believed there was danger : but could a man of comprehensive mind have been scared without a cause ?

As to his mere manner of delivery Mr. Yorke is fluent and impressive, and could he contrive to subdue his irritability there is no man who would be heard with greater pleasure.

Mr. Stephen is superior to Mr. Yorke in point of intellect, and I believe not inferior in point of honesty. Many persons who think it impossible that the man who votes with Ministers can be honest, will be startled at the high opinion which is given of this Gentleman : but I cannot consent to their criterion of character. I can conceive it to be quite as possible that an honest man shall approve every part of a system supported by men whom he respects, as that he should embrace every crude notion of some independent Chief, who has no system, and no connected principles of action. It is for this

reason, that never having heard Mr. Stephen express any opinion unworthy of a good or sensible man, I can without hesitation pronounce him upright, though he now and then exhibits a little foolish pedantry, and is very ready to make a speech in favour of the Administration. He is certainly an able man, and had he been disciplined in early life to the practice of Parliamentary disputation, would have been one of the best debaters in the House. As it is, he is too pompous and too hot,—two errors which are very destructive to the effect even of the best speeches, and which, at his age, cannot be reasonably expected to be cured. He seems never to forget that he is a Master in Chancery—a most respectable situation certainly, but hardly sufficient to warrant any assumption of superiority over men who have been Secretaries of State and Chancellors. His manner is as solemn as that of a Judge passing sentence, and is calculated to stagger those who have heard the definition that man is a laughing animal. It is true, that the business of Parliament is grave and important, and that mirth is excessively out of place within its walls. But grace is not levity, nor ease jo-

cularity : and Mr. Stephen, by observing his friend Mr. Wilberforce, may learn that the most awful doctrines may be uttered with a winning beauty of manner which shall charm as much as it impresses, and throws round truth a loveliness which endears as much as her dignity commands. The defect, however, to which I here allude, is one so trifling in its moral importance, that it would not be worthy of mention, unless it detracted considerably from the weight of those estimable talents which Mr. Stephen possesses, and put into the inferior class one who deserves to rank, if not with the first, yet at the head of the second.

SIR JOHN NEWPORT AND SIR H. PARNELL.

THE Irish nation may be divided in two classes, which are as distinctly characterized as any two separate and distant nations : the one is fiery, quick in apprehension, unthinking, careless of wealth, careless of life, careless of every thing but honour, good by instinct rather than principle, magnanimous without effort and almost without object : the other is cool, calculating, systematic, virtuous by the rule of utility, and brave without wasting one atom of unnecessary energy. It is hardly possible that two races so essentially different should have sprung from the same parent stock : accordingly, we may fairly rank the former among the Aborigines of the land, and the latter may be supposed to be descended from those Puritan adventurers of Scotland, Wales, and England, who were left by Cromwell to civilize the country which he had conquered ; and who, after the improved plan of civilizing colonists, confined most of the

benefits of their skill and knowledge to themselves. It would be over-nice to pretend that this line of discrimination is invariably observable: the parties here and there may have amalgamated by the effect of long intercourse, by intermarriage, by insensible imitation;—but though the new-comers do frequently bear strong marks of resemblance with the original Irish, yet it is seldom that you find any one with the genuine Irish name; that has adopted in the smallest degree those habits of calculation and system which belong to the descendants of their old invaders. How far it is politic that the laws of the country should be employed to preserve those distinctions which the operation of natural causes might entirely wear away, and how far the removal of the Catholic disabilities might alone tend towards creating an affinity between the discordant qualities, are questions which are too important to be discussed in a short preface, but which are well worthy the attention of those legislators and others who love Ireland, either for its sake or their own.

The two Gentlemen, whose names are at the head of this article, though I should suppose that neither of them is of the real old

Irish breed, yet may fairly be selected as specimens of the different classes of character in their most respectable degree. Sir John Newport is a man of regular statesmanly education, and has known the labour and routine of office, yet he is as hasty and fiery as a boy: though it must be allowed that his anger is roused far oftener by what he considers the invasion of right principle, than by any personal attack on himself. Again, he is a man of unquestionable talent, and can talk with as much fluent and animated propriety as any man on the great maxims of justice and humanity; yet of all the distinguished men in the House, perhaps he is the one most remarkable for not reasoning in his speeches. I do not say that his results are not as correct as if they were all built on the compactest syllogisms; but it is a whimsical peculiarity that he should have such an utter disdain of the ratiocinating process, as never to favour us with one argument, or one link in the chain of demonstration. I recollect that in our themes at school the boys were never allowed to assert even that Virtue was excellent, without assigning some cause, and it frequently cost no little rubbing of the head, and biting the

nail to render a reason. Now, though I believe no one looks back to the days of his school-labour with much pleasure, yet I have so much respect for this custom, that I could wish Sir J. Newport would condescend to adopt it. He makes a broad and sweeping assertion: perfectly justifiable I allow: well, his auditors who have been, at least three-fourths of them, bred up in the way I have described, begin to stretch their ears in expectation of a reason. To satisfy this laudable *orexis*, what does Sir John Newport? He pours out another assertion equally true, but twice as broad and twice as sweeping as the other. If every mind were as well instructed on the subject as his own, this plan of discoursing would not much signify: but, perhaps, nine out of ten of his auditors have never turned their attention to the subject before that moment, and they cannot find their way, except by the slow gradations of reasoning. For instance, the propositions of Euclid are true, and in a company of mathematicians it would not be necessary to demonstrate their truth: yet these same truths to a less learned assembly would appear sometimes not intelligible, sometimes startling, and not unfrequently false and im-

possible. I may have said more than is necessary on this point: perhaps I am mistaken: but it always struck me as a peculiar feature in the speeches of Sir John Newport, that they were full of assertion rather than argument: that while they were plentifully stuffed with first principles (excellent matter certainly) they had little of reasoning and as little of applicability.

Sir H. Parnell is a very different sort of speaker: he is more anxious to show the process of his argumentation than the result: he would scorn to say that 9 divided by 3 gives 3, unless he worked out the sum, and proved it to every body's satisfaction. His mind seems slow, and takes many steps before it reaches a conclusion: it is therefore as tedious as it is satisfactory to follow him through his elaborate detail. The effect of this was, that some years ago, when he used to speak for two hours on the Catholic Question, his audience was usually exceedingly thin, and at the same time very impatient. At that period it was impossible not to admire his cool perseverance in uttering what nobody seemed inclined to hear. Things, however, are changed, and he is now an important personage, and is

heard with attention during any length he pleases. He is ready enough to avail himself of his new opportunity, and rather assumes the appearance of a prominent statesman. What he says does not convey any idea that he has much depth of understanding, or much extent of information. He seems as unable to advance without the aid of Adam Smith, as the old Oxford Tutors used to be without their Aristotelian staff. I do not wish to make any allusions to the Corn Laws, because the subject is too important to be huddled up in the corner of an article ; but it appears to me that he has through the business put on an air of legislative wisdom, which is hardly warranted by the most extensive knowledge of arithmetic, or by the best applied quotations from the *Wealth of Nations*. I would not, however, consent to impute any thing but conceit on this occasion. It would be a gross and wicked calumny to ascribe any interested motive to a man who has, on many and important occasions, shown himself not more the friend of Ireland, than the ready and firm advocate of the cause of justice, humanity, and upright principle, whoever were the parties interested in the issue. The pe-

cularities of such a man may excite a smile; should they become troublesome, they may even provoke reprehension; but no temporary feeling of distaste must be allowed to shut our eyes to the merits of one, whose public conduct has ever been steady, temperate, upright, and as far as I can judge, unmixed with any motive unworthy of a patriotic Gentleman.

SIR FRANCIS BURDETT.

IT will perhaps be expected that in discussing the character of Sir Francis Burdett a great deal will be said about Parliamentary Reform. There certainly is an obvious connexion between the two subjects, but as it would be impossible to crowd into the space allotted one half of the reflections which occur to one on that important question of Reform, I shall decline it altogether. It is one which, of all others, requires the most investigation and deliberation, and on which it is mischievous to give merely the results of opinions, instead of disclosing all the steps by which the inference is obtained, and the best possible means of applying it. To ring in the ears of a nation that its Constitution is miserably diseased, without at the same time proposing a certain remedy, can only tend to excite discontent and tumult; nor can I bring myself to think that those who undertake to cure all the evils of the state by a specific

whose virtues are untried, and at least problematical, are a bit more respectable than the Empiric who boasts of his universal Panacea.—I impute no improper motives to any advocate for Reform, but I think that every one is bound to show that his proposed medicine *must* do good: it is not sufficient that it *may* in a case of such risk. The sacred body of a nation's laws and usages must not be made a subject for experiments. This observation does not apply to those who wish only to remove some of the corrupted excrescences of the Constitution: their operations are perfectly safe: but it is incumbent on them, too, not to affect a more important tone than the occasion requires. They ought not, when they are simply abolishing some nominal absurdities, to assume the airs of men who are working a radical cure. But I will not pursue this subject, nor apply it, but shall hasten to a less difficult part of my task, and on which I suppose there cannot be much controversy.

It is somewhat surprising, that under a Government where the people have so much influence as in this country, so few persons have thought it worth while to apply them-

selves strenuously to form their opinions and guide their passions: the people is an engine of such immense power, and so easy wielded, that it seems to be too tempting to escape any aspirant after distinction in the State. Yet there is scarcely one such man to be found in our history. The Members, who at the end of James's reign, and at the beginning of Charles's, carried on such a furious opposition to the Court, were certainly demagogues, inasmuch as they in a great measure led the public mind; but upon the whole they must be considered as men violently in earnest about the objects which they were pursuing, and whose favour with the people was rather the necessary result of their conduct, than their direct aim through the use of any popular arts. In a subsequent reign Shaftesbury thought proper to manage the many-headed monster for a short time, just by way of annoying the King: but he was too proud or too careless to pay that constant attention which is requisite for a constant popularity. The man who perhaps has made the deepest impression on the multitude was Wilkes: his exertions, however were merely the convulsions of a short-lived paroxysm of rage: and

when his anger subsided, all anxiety about interesting the people subsided with it. It was not till within these few years that gentlemen of consideration seem to have solely employed themselves in the business of acquiring popularity, without any view to party purposes, without any intention of gratifying private resentments, but actuated simply, as it appears, by the desire of the undowered love of the many, expressed by their clappings and their huzzas. The most conspicuous of the persons who have proposed to themselves such an object of ambition is undoubtedly Sir F. Burdett: and it must be allowed, that, in some respects, he has taken no wrong measure of himself, in supposing that his powers were fitted to his desires. In the first place, the Hon. Baronet is one of those whose very appearance wins a hundred hearts before he opens his lips: an elegant figure; a face, of which the outline is finely Roman, though the expression is rather weak and indecisive; manners, at once courteous and simple, would be alone sufficient to delight the common observer; add to these, a voice of the most insinuating melody; a delivery fluent and animated, yet always modest,

and sometimes even diffident ; and they altogether form a combination which interests and attaches every heart. Let the man so qualified profess himself the friend of his admirers, and descant on the topics dearest to their feelings, and their regard will almost rise into enthusiastic idolatry. Such is the first impression made on the auditors of Sir Francis Burdett ; but he is ill calculated to keep the affection which he can so easily raise. Enthusiasm is of an evanescent nature, and though the people seldom withdraw their regard without just cause, yet their love, like that of an individual, must be fed and supported by perpetual fuel. This the subject of this article is not able to supply : he has neither the energy nor the talent sufficient for constant exertion. He is even indolent both in his body and in his intellect : he has the appearance of a man who reads more than he thinks, as well in the matter of his speeches as in the manner of uttering them. Mixed up with the polish of the gentleman there is much of the bashfulness of the recluse student, and even his politeness is not the easy urbanity of a man of the world, but what is better, the emanation of a kind heart. It may excite

some surprise that a person, who, notwithstanding his *primâ facie* qualifications, must have been conscious of these serious drawbacks to success in a laborious pursuit, should have chosen such a path, or not have left it when he saw it crowded with obstructions. To this, as to most of the inconsistencies of human conduct, there is one solution: it is the fantastic work of vanity, that feeling which is implanted in us to check the proud aspirings of human dignity by its unconscious fondness for incongruity. It can throw an air of burlesque on the noblest actions, and by its blunders, excite a laugh even at the expense of the good and the wise. Ambition is presumptuous and love is blind: but vanity is bolder than the rash hopes of a youthful soldier: is blinder than the doatings of an old man's affection. This merry mischievous influence, which possesses us all in different degrees, has taken a sovereign hold of Sir F. Burdett. It is this which makes him think that he is secure of that popularity which he has once excited, even though he should remain silent on all the questions where his admirers most look to him for the sanction of his opinion. Like a careless husband, he imagines that he may lounge

and enjoy his repose, and never make another effort to confirm his conquest: and thinks a kind glance, or word now and then, directed to the being who dotes on him, amply sufficient to satisfy the cravings of affection, which is the more insatiable the more it is sincere. The husband is frequently only roused from his delusion, by finding that love has sunk irretrievably into the coldest indifference; and Sir F. Burdett, whose inactivity and reluctance to present himself seem daily increasing, may some day be waked from his trance by the surprise at hearing, that the people have almost forgot his name and existence. I do not think that day is very distant. I know he offers a kind of excuse for his relaxed exertion: he pretends to take no interest in the debates of a degraded House of Commons, and thinks it scorn to lift up his voice in that polluted chamber. This is worse than vanity; it is an affectation which must proceed either from a disgraceful ignorance or from a violent over-rating of his own character. He knows little if he does not know that the speech of a favourite Member has as much influence on the popular mind as the largest Ministerial majority; but it is somewhat worse than ignorance, if, feeling this,

he from a pretended disdain will omit to lift up a voice which is not without its influence, even within the walls of the House as well as without it. He disdains to sit or speak in the House of Commons! Does he so? Is it a disgrace to be the companion of such men as Brand, and Romilly, and Whitbread, none of whom have ever expressed any unwillingness to belong to the British Parliament? If such be his real opinion, he is indeed unfit to sit on the same benches with those excellent persons, and should be condemned for ever to preside at Taverns and declaim at Hustings. Let us however hope better of a man who has many good and many pleasing qualities, whose intentions seem honest, and who is yet young enough to establish, by wise and discreet conduct, that reputation which he has justly gained by his honourable feelings in the cause of humanity. Indeed as to myself, I love the man so well, that the very anger which may seem to tinge some of these remarks springs from the irritation of disappointed hope, at seeing a favourite object either careless about his character, or marring it by inexcusable affectations.

MR. HUSKISSON AND MR. HORNER.

IF any man, or set of men, wish to form a distinct party in the House of Commons, the first care, as might be expected, is to look about and collect all the various sorts of talents and acquirements which are necessary for a complete political establishment. It must be able to meet and annoy the Ministry at all possible points of controversy, and, if occasion should offer, to fill its place. As in war one army would make but little stand against another, unless it were equally equipped with infantry, artillery, and cavalry, so in these wordy contests there would be but small chance of success for an opposition, unless declaimer were arrayed against declaimer, financier against financier, and the man of detail against the man of detail. Declamation must be answered by declamation, because there is a large assortment of unthinking young men and good-natured old men in the House, on whom fine-worded common-

places make an immense impression : and out of doors, with the credulous public, a well-sounding sentiment will be taken in earnest, or as an equivalent of, a hundred actions. The political economist must be met by a man of corresponding science, because there are many sturdy heads on whom rhetoric produces no more effect than lightning on the impassive ice : they must have argument and regular deduction : they receive a splendid speech with the kind of feeling by which one may suppose a certain eminent astronomer was influenced, when he said, that Thomson's Poems proved nothing. Again, there are likewise many men of business, " forsooth great arithmeticians ;" and woe to the man who before them should make a slip in discussing a question of detail : had he the fine sense of Fox and the wit of Sheridan, he would by them be immediately considered as an unproducing driveller : and their contempt would be as strong as Pope's tailor perhaps felt for Pope * when he saw that the poet could not cast up the items of his bill for clothes. It is pleasant to observe the manner of a detail-

* Pope was entirely ignorant of arithmetic.

minister, when some young or indiscreet opponent has ventured beyond his depth. He only half suppresses a laugh of surprise, rises with an air of careless superiority, draws in his breath and throws it out again in the style of a man who has heard some remark tremendously absurd, rubs his hands, and elevates his eye-brows: after this silent but very intelligible preface, he proceeds, in a tone of the most complacent affability, to express his astonishment at the monstrous error into which the Hon. Gentleman, no doubt from inadvertence, has fallen; he then triumphantly, but mildly, enters into a long numerical statement where it might puzzle even the American boy to follow him; and lastly, gives his objector the *coup de grâce*, by insolently regretting that a gentleman of such eminent talents has apparently paid so little attention to this most important subject. From all this it follows that every party must take care to be complete in all their branches, before it can hope to beat or succeed to its rivals in place. At present in the House of Commons there seem to be two parties in regular opposition, to say nothing of the different companies of *guerillas*, who fight chiefly for the pleasure of

fighting, without any fixed object. Mr. Canning is at the head of one, Mr. Ponsonby of the other: I say nothing here of Mr. Whitbread, because I do not choose to introduce him on so trifling an occasion: he stands alone, and must hereafter be considered by himself. Each of these parties is tolerably furnished with the requisite means of annoyance and defence, and can go to battle without the fear of being utterly routed. There is not room for me to give a description of each particular kind of force of these two divisions: it will be sufficient now to allude to the persons who command the economical department of the respective corps.

Mr. Huskisson is the Canning-financier, and in some respects may be said to have the advantage even of the Chancellor of the Exchequer: for though neither his knowledge nor experience are equally extensive, yet he can give a better and more effective account of what he knows and remembers. There is such order and perspicuity in his statements and his reasonings, that persons who are utterly ignorant of the subject conceive that they understand it while he is speaking, and believe themselves convinced when they have

been only pleased. The pleasure which his speeches give is not indeed of the higher order; it is the sort of satisfaction which is felt at seeing an intricate knot cleverly untied, a puzzling theory perfectly developed. Those who can relish a neatly-demonstrated problem of Newton, or a well-argued page of Hobbes, would also feel much delight, though certainly inferior, at hearing the narrations and arguments of Mr. Huskisson. He is also of a liberal school, and shows as few prejudices and obstinacies as can well be expected from a man devoted to a particular science. He is the clearest-headed man in the House after Mr. Tierney.

Mr. Horner is the political economist of the Whig-party, though he deals rather in the principles than in the detail of the subject. He is a young man of very considerable talent, and his education appears to have been on a much larger scale than that of Mr. Huskisson. He is not so clear as that Gentleman, but he can adorn the subject with a greater variety of illustration, and can even be eloquent where eloquence seems so little possible. Perhaps there is no man in the House who has equal general knowledge, to-

gether with equal power of expressing that knowledge. If his manner were at all equal to his matter, he would soon be a very considerable person; but his diction is delivered in a style unanimated and uninteresting. His appearance is rather heavy, and his tones are dull and unvaried, except now and then by a plaintive arrogance of voice, which at once tires and offends. It is to be lamented that he will not take pains to please as well as instruct: for he has great advantages, which might be easily improved to any extent. He has with all parties a very high character for talent, discretion, and integrity, and is very much and generally respected throughout the House. Could he add to these important aids the power of pleasing, he might look to much higher objects than he can now reasonably aspire to. A very little effort would suffice: a little more briskness of manner, a little more good humour in his tones, a little less gloom in his looks, would fully answer the purpose. Respect is a powerful engine to raise a man, but the kindness of friends is more powerful: and surely that man must be very arrogant or very indolent, who, when both means are in

his reach, will disregard one of them from the presumption that he can succeed without those efforts which have been necessary even for the promotion of the best and ablest men.

THE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

WHOEVER may be the Speaker of the House of Commons, he must necessarily become in a short time as artificial a being as a College-Tutor, or a Drill-Serjeant. For the purpose of preserving that decorum which an assembly of enlightened men would, in the heat of debate, violate quite as often as the merest mob, it is requisite that some check, real or nominal, should exist; which may perpetually be present to the eyes of the orators. A President is therefore chosen, and to him is delegated, not only by his equals but also by his superiors in rank and talents, the full power of restraining the impetuous, and of silencing the impertinent and obtrusive. It is obvious that the authority of a person so chosen would be forgot or despised during the vehemence of the passions, unless he were invested with some adscititious dignity and paraphernalia, which may serve to conceal and merge the insignificance of

the individual character. The flowing wig and full robes have an important use : for I suppose that nobody will deny, if the Speaker were dressed in smart buckskin breeches with well-topped boots, a buff waistcoat and blue frock coat, with a rose-bud stuck in the button-hole, that in such cases, whatever might be his personal respectability, he might roar to the crack of his voice, or rather "to the crack of doom," before he would be able to command order in a tempestuous debate : the Members would look towards the Chair, and, seeing it filled by one whose appearance so much resembled their own, they would disdain to be silenced by such an unofficial and ordinary being. Something of this sort happens frequently in Committees, where, though the discussion seldom rises much above the tone of conversation, the unwigged Chairman finds it difficult to hold the Members to those rules of politeness and mutual patience which are prescribed by Society as well as by Parliament. The Speaker, therefore, is properly clothed with all those unusual appearances, with all that pomp and circumstance of superior rank, to which mankind ever pay a voluntary and wise obedi-

ence. This fictitious elevation is useful, and even necessary for those purposes for which it is designed, but it cannot fail to destroy the simplicity and naturalness of the person elevated, at least for the time. He sees himself called upon to exercise a decisive authority over his equals or superiors : he finds his opinion solemnly referred to by those who, perhaps, despise his personal understanding ; he is required to arbitrate between two debaters of the highest condition, and of exalted intellects, who, on any private occasion, would probably disdain to consult him, but who now implicitly submit themselves to his judgment. It is possible that a very wise man,—that is, one compounded of all the wisdom of the Seven Sages, with Solomon into the bargain,—it is barely possible that such a being might feel himself humiliated instead of ennobled by such ideal respect and imaginary honours ; but the generality of men will be very differently affected—they will become portentously grave and awfully consequential ; their smile will not be like that of other men—it will express condescension without kindness, and recognition without familiarity ; their walk will be slow as a

dead march, and their voice will be preterhumanly precise like the sound of an oracle. Though such a situation would, I think, produce this effect on any given person who should accept it, yet the process would be slower with some men than with others. For instance, a gay soldier or a fox-hunting Baronet would take a longer time to be formalized than would be necessary for a sober lawyer. It is, therefore, usual to choose the Speakers from the lawyers, partly, no doubt, on account of their technical learning, but chiefly because their peculiar habits have furnished them with those characteristic manners which seem so essential to the Chair.

The present Speaker is quite as respectable as any of his predecessors. He has the peculiarities which belong, I think, rather to his place than to his person: he is always fully impressed with the importance of his situation, which is denoted by every look and gesture: whether he is expressing the thanks or the censure of the House, he adopts that tone of solemn superiority which is calculated to give double weight both to the praise and the reprimand. Perhaps this manner would

not stand the test of criticism ; but neither the man who is flattered, nor he who is reprehended, have much disposition to laugh : self-love and fear are never fitted to make minute examination. The best parts of the Speaker's character are his ready and accurate knowledge, by which he is, on the spot, enabled to decide on any difficult point ; his persevering firmness in supporting the privileges, and as far as in him lies the reputation of the House of Commons ; and lastly, his impartiality in the conduct of any dispute which may arise among the Members. His understanding is not of the superior order, but it is well fitted for his situation : if his range is not extensive, he sees his way very clearly. His mind is well cultivated according to the usual meaning of that term : that is, it is imbued with the best parts of classic literature. As, however, either his intellect or his taste is not equal to his learning, his literary recollections frequently rather injure than adorn his orations. An image or an illustration taken from Greece or Rome may have a pretty look in a compliment to a successful General, provided the said General should happen to understand it ; but it would be

terribly misplaced in a grave exposition of the business and conduct of the House of Commons. In the first instance it would be a pleasing elegance; in the second a tinsel puerility. Why? Certainly not because the writings of moderns are of a more manly cast than the eternal fabrics of those ancient wits;—that man must be a tasteless ignorant who could broach such a supposition;—but because to adopt indiscriminately images or forms of speech which belong to other customs and manners, betrays that want of judgment remarkable in children, who would use what they admire without regard to its efficacy or applicability. I do not mean to say that the Speaker has not, on several occasions, displayed in argument a very manly, judicious understanding; but he evidently has a strong bias towards the florid. It is a taste somewhat new in an English Speaker, and rather seems to belong to a neighbouring nation. Perhaps Mr. Abbot will be the less tenacious of his ornamental style, when he recollects that it was the great affectation of the revolutionary orators, and particularly of Lucien Buonaparte, when he was President of the Council of Five Hundred. The showy

harangues which that Gentleman then made would disgrace a school-boy ; and, by the way, unless his taste in poetry is far superior to his oratorical taste, he will be a very mediocre bard indeed, something between a Fitzgerald and a Rosa Matilda,—very dull, and very frisky. But whatever may be said of the Speaker's taste in style, no one can impeach the manliness of his character, as far as regards the vigilant energy with which he transacts the business of his office, and the firm integrity with which, on several occasions, he has supported his own dignity and that of the House. The burst of honest indignation, and the dignified argument, which he displayed on the question of the sale of seats in Parliament, ought never to be forgotten. It were well if every Member would keep that speech as a manual, and peruse it at least once a month. If the Speaker had ten thousand ridiculous peculiarities, such conduct would be sufficient to redeem him into esteem? much more should it have that effect when all that can be alleged against him, beside that his taste smacks too much of the College, is, that for a little man he is rather

too pompous: in other words, to use an illustration in his own way, and which he will understand—that, with the size of Tydeus, he assumes the portly carriage of Agamemnon.

MR. WHITBREAD.

ANY person who casts a careful eye over the House of Commons will find that the different portions into which society is divided are tolerably well represented in that Assembly. The landed interest, the mercantile interest, the privileged orders and the professions, have all their adequate proportion of advocates to assert their claims : what seems to be wanting is a class of persons who, without reference to any partial interests, should speak the sentiments and uphold the rights of the nation at large. The history of Parliament will supply but few names to whom this description would be applicable : Mr. Fox, with all his liberal thinking and benevolent feeling, was too much attached to party-views : and Mr. Windham, who has been absurdly proclaimed as a complete specimen of the English character, was perhaps the most unnatural compound of heterogeneous qualities to which the name

of Englishman was ever affixed. His brilliant talents, his manly courage, his cheerful good-nature, will very readily be allowed to be perfectly English : but what shall be said of the oblique sophistries of his understanding, of his want of feeling, and above all of that blind misapprehension which induced him to believe that the people of England were a swinish multitude, incapable of reflection, and in whom not even the common and brutal virtue of bravery could be cherished without cock-fights and bull-baits and Jew-boxers. It would be easy to enumerate many more inconsistencies of his character, such as his mixture of the fine gentleman and the coarse joker, of the refined theorist and blundering observer : but enough has probably been said to show that such a man could not be called the Representative of the English People.

It is to Mr. Whitbread alone that this title seems entirely due. He is an epitome of the national character. It is he who represents the straight-forward good sense,—the warmth of heart, sometimes indiscreet, but always generous,—the simple manners, sometimes abrupt, but always kind,—the sturdy honesty,

sometimes rough, but alway consistent,—the shrewd penetration, ever active, but ever candid;—the boldness of spirit, sometimes violent but always steady;—which altogether have ever been considered as the infallible marks of a genuine Englishman. His exterior is as English as his mind: his steady eye, his countenance deeply marked with thoughtfulness, but fluctuating with feeling, his sober gait, his unaffected gestures, even the decided vigorous cast of his person, give assurance of a man who belongs to a country where the naked soul may yet walk abroad and feel no shame,—where as yet the artificial mummeries of a corrupt civilization are not necessary for the support of a public reputation;—where as yet there is none of the imbecility of denaturalized states. The very plainness of his dress shows that he is one of that people among whom the consciousness of internal rectitude is esteemed as the surest property and the noblest ornament. I have frequently smiled at an observation of persons whom I have taken with me to hear Mr. Whitbread: they have allowed the energy and acuteness of his understanding, the honest boldness of his sentiments, and the tone of feeling which

gives an interest to all that he says ; but they think him unpolished, deficient in the graces. Alas ! how much they mistake the objects and views of that distinguished Commoner. He does not take his daily seat in the House of Commons, in order to make graceful obeisances and pronounce pretty periods : he leaves such small trifling to the Castlereaghs and the Cannings : he comes there to do the business of the nation, to take care that the common-weal receives no injury, to watch over and protect the Constitution against the intemperance of zeal and the insidiousness of ambition, to animate and assist the labours of the honest, to crush the efforts of the fraudulent and selfish, to vindicate the oppressed, to speak Truth. To object to a man occupied in such exalted pursuits, that his manner is not exquisitely polished, is as silly as it would be to complain that Michael Angelo has not the prettiness of Watteau,—that Milton wants the softness of Sedley,—that Newton is not so entertaining as Goldsmith. I admire, and very sincerely, the courtesy and urbanity of Lord Castlereagh : they are the becoming decorations of his situation : he is backed by the powerful in-

fluence of Administration, and has leisure to be gentle without any detriment. Not so the man who has to fight frequently, almost unassisted, against the compact energies of Government. A soft answer or a candid smile may turn away wrath, but cannot conquer positive force; and to attempt to overthrow a ministerial measure, by the help of elegant sentences and comely action, would be about as wise as to storm a triple battery with a fan of painted feathers. The manner, therefore, of Mr. Whitbread seems perfectly consonant to his objects: he aims at awakening the attention of the indolent, at rousing the fears of the guilty; and for this purpose it is essential that he should appear in earnest;—a conclusion to which few persons would come, if they saw him more attentive about the form than the matter of his speeches. I confess I like to witness his sharp, sometimes boisterous attacks on the complacent strength of Administration: he attacks those who are able to defend themselves, and he attacks them in the way best suited to his purpose. I like his manner also, because it forms an agreeable contrast to that contemptible namby-pamby gentleness, which is now becoming so fashion-

able in the House of Commons. If ever I am inclined to think it overbearing, it is when he makes an assault on the inoffensive simplicity of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. I have seen that gentleman as much startled by Mr. Whitbread as a girl by a discharge of artillery: he at length rises and looks about him with a face of the most helpless dismay, and is compelled to grasp tightly with both hands the table of the House of Commons, before he can muster courage to articulate one syllable in answer. Here, then, Mr. Whitbread might perhaps relax a little of the severity of his manner from a consideration of the unresisting nature of his opponent, who is at the same time one of the best-intentioned men of the House. But enough and more has been said on this supposed defect of Mr. Whitbread: and indeed I should not have thought it necessary to allude to it, were it not almost the only fault which, as far as I have heard, even his enemies can object to him.

Those who wish to form a correct estimate of his character must not look to two or three particular speeches, but to the whole tenour of his public life. They will then see a consistency of action which is to be found in few other public

men: they will see a man always the strenuous and watchful opponent of administration, not from any paltry ambition of place, but on the greatest constitutional ground of operating as a check to the natural tyranny of high power: they will see a patriot, who, while his heart glows at the proud triumphs of his own countrymen, can find leisure to think of the welfare of other nations besides his own: they will see an advocate, ever accessible and ever ready to support the cause of the injured, whether it be an oppressed alien, or over-punished convict, or an insulted Princess: they will see that union of talent and perseverance, of justice and courage, of eloquence and sound sense, which makes the cause of Truth as irresistible as it is respectable. People who think only of ministerial majorities will call this an exaggerated statement, and say that too much importance is attached to the labours of this distinguished Member. They have not thoroughly considered the subject. Mr. Whitbread cannot indeed command a majority of votes, but he can, and I will venture to say does, on most important occasions, command a majority of opinions.

Above all, he commands and guides the sense of the nation :—a force ten times more powerful than the House of Commons, because it always, directly or indirectly, influences the conduct of that assembly. To this the proudest minister is forced to bow : with reference to this he fabricates every measure : a piece of meditated tyranny is clipped away from this law ; a patch of desirable fraud is torn off from that arrangement ; and corruption itself is quietly purged of the most acrid particles of its poison. Such is the power of a great moral check when directed by an able and honest man. Nay, such is the attention of Mr. Whitbread to every branch of parliamentary business, such is his acuteness and such his fearlessness, that I have no doubt that many a dirty parish or county job has been stripped of half its intended baseness, lest it should be noticed and denounced by that vigilant and upright Commoner. This is an elevation of dignified usefulness, to which the most sanguine ambition could hardly hope to aspire : and to this proud height he has raised himself by the sheer force of consistency. His talents are great, but talents unsupported by the pub-

lic esteem are nothing else than "leather or prunella." Look at Mr. Sheridan and Mr. Tierney, the first of them the most variously-gifted man of the age, the second qualified to be one of the most useful : but, owing to a real or an apparent want of independence of character, what are they ? the first a mere drinker of wine, the second a maker of amusing speeches from the back benches.* By attributing so much to the influence of honesty, I would not be supposed to under-rate the intellectual power of Mr. Whitbread : there is a quickness, a dexterity, and an energy about his understanding, which makes him one of the best and most formidable debaters in the House. He detects a sophistry with the ken of an eagle, and breaks in pieces a falsehood with the vigour of a lion. He is moreover the most eloquent speaker in the House, if eloquence consist, not in ornamented sentences, but in the language which, coming from the heart, never fails to touch

* Many of Mr. Tierney's speeches are as full of good sense as of joke ; yet, so it is, the House thinks them only designed for entertainment.

the heart. His speeches afford a most refreshing contrast to the mild circumlocutions of government harangues, and the gaudy rhetoric of theatrical declamation. Before his matter has made an impression, there is a warmth and earnestness about his tones which rouses and interests all his auditors. They listen and are charmed with the manly spirit of his sentiments and the simple strength of his diction: instead of the cold artifices of composition, he gives them the natural dignity of impassioned thinking: for the splendid figures of speech, he gives them the pure brightness of the image of truth.

Some persons may regret that Mr. Whitbread is never likely to attain any of the usual objects of ambition: but can any peerage or blue ribbon be equal to the dignity of being hailed by the universal people as the people's guardian. His eye watches for the good of the nation: its eye is ever fixed upon him with a proud and admiring confidence. The people are never ungrateful, but cheerfully give to every merit its due reward. The successful warrior reaps wealth and honours: the skilful negotiator may, if he please, enjoy the

same recompense for his labours : but England reserves its full tide of gratitude, affection, and esteem, for that man who has through twenty years of arduous conflict vindicated the rights of freedom and humanity, and whose successful toils justly entitle him to be called her greatest and most useful citizen.

THE END.

BOOKS

Recently Published by

BALDWIN, CRADOCK, AND JOY.

DODSLEY'S ANNUAL REGISTER, or a **VIEW** of the **HISTORY, POLITICS, and LITERATURE**, for the Year **1813**, 16s.

A few complete sets of this valuable Work in 55 vols. may be had in boards, and of the New Series, commencing at that important period 1791, in 23 vols. 8vo. for 17*l.* 10s.

Any single Volume to complete sets at 15s. each to 1808, and to 1812, 16s.

The volume for the year 1814, a period of almost unprecedented interest, is in the press, and will be published very speedily.

2. TRACTS, HISTORICAL AND STATISTICAL, ON INDIA, with Journals of several Tours through various Parts of the Peninsula; also an Account of Sumatra, in a Series of Letters. Illustrated by Maps of the Peninsula of Hindostan, and by a variety of other Plates. By **BENJAMIN HEYNE, M.D. F.L.S.** Member of the Asiatic Society at Calcutta, and Surgeon and Naturalist on the Establishment at Fort St. George. 4to. 2*l.* 2s.

The information contained in these tracts is of a very miscellaneous nature; historical, statistical, scientific, economical, and political. They are the result of inquiries made under the direct authority of the government in India.

3. TRAVELS THROUGH CANADA, AND THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA; including a Description of Newfoundland, the Magdalen Islands, Quebec, Montreal, New York, &c. their Manners, curious Customs, Anecdotes, Commerce of Canada, Climate, the Lakes, Imports and Exports, Duties, Tonnage, &c. from 1806 to 1811, State of Society of Canada, South Carolina, Boston, Charlestown, Savannah, their Literature, Natural History, &c. By **JOHN LAMBERT, Esq.** The Second Edition, Corrected and much Improved. To which are added Biographical Notices of Madison, General Moreau, Jefferson, Madame Jerome Buonaparte, Adams, Col. Burr, Randolph, Emmett, Barlow, Gen. Pinckney, Monroe, &c. with a General Statistical View of the United States for a Period

of Twenty Years, in 2 vols. 8vo. ornamented with 16 Coloured Engravings, a Chart of Quebec and its Environs, drawn from the Survey made by Order of Admiral Saunders, and a Handsome Coloured Map of Canada and the United States of America, 30s. in extra boards.

4. TRAVELS IN SWEDEN during the Autumn of 1812, with an Account of Lapland. By THOMAS THOMSON, M.D. F.R.S. L. and E. F.L.S. Illustrated by Maps, Portraits, and other Plates, 4to. 2l. 2s.

This work is the result of a journey through Sweden, undertaken principally with a view to mineralogical researches, of which it contains many interesting details. Besides a map of Sweden, a plan of Stockholm, and a variety of other plates, it comprises geognostic maps of Gothland, Nerike, and Sconia, plans of the copper mine at Fahlun, &c.

5. GENERAL HISTORY AND COLLECTION OF VOYAGES AND TRAVELS, arranged in Systematic Order; forming a complete History of the Origin and Progress of Navigation, Discovery, and Commerce, by Sea and Land; from the earliest Ages to the present time. By ROBERT KERR, F.R.S. and F.A.S. Edinburgh. Illustrated with Maps and Charts.

This collection, it is expected, will be comprised in about twenty volumes, of which thirteen are already published, 12s. each. The work appears in half volumes every two months.

6. AN ACCOUNT OF THE PAST AND PRESENT STATE OF THE ISLE OF MAN; including a Sketch of its Mineralogy; an Outline of its Laws, with the Privileges enjoyed by Debtors; and a History of the Island. By GEORGE WOODS. With a Map, 8vo. 10s. 6d.

7. AN ACCOUNT OF THE BRITISH SETTLEMENT OF HONDURAS; being a brief View of its Commercial and Agricultural Resources, Soil, Climate, Natural History, &c. with a Map. To which are added, Sketches of the Manners and Customs of the Mosquito Indians, preceded by the Journal of a Voyage to the Mosquito Shore. The Second Edition, 8vo. 7s.

8. A VIEW OF SOCIETY AND MANNERS IN THE NORTH OF IRELAND in the Summer and Autumn of 1812. By JOHN GAMBLE, Esq. 8vo. 10s. 6d. boards.

"Mr. Gamble is a man of vivacity and good humour, mingled with a due portion of feeling and gravity; which give to the remarks which he makes, the scenes which he describes, and the incidents which he relates, a considerable degree of interest, and render the perusal always agreeable, and often edifying."—*Critical Review*, May, 1813.

"Mr. Gamble exhibits animated sketches of the prominent qualities of his countrymen, the inhabitants of the North of Ireland; and creates an impression on the attention of his reader, which is likely to remain, when more elaborate descriptions have escaped from recollection."—*Monthly Review*, September, 1813.

9. SKETCHES OF HISTORY, POLITICS, AND MANNERS; taken in Dublin and the North of Ireland in the Autumn of 1810. By JOHN GAMBLE, Esq. 8vo. 8s. boards.

10. MEMOIRS OF ALGERNON SYDNEY, by G. W. MEADLEY, with an Appendix. In 1 vol. 8vo. ornamented with a Portrait of Sydney, finely engraved by Engleheart, 12s. boards.

11. MEMOIRS OF WILLIAM PALEY, D. D. Second Edition, corrected and enlarged, to which is added, An Appendix, containing Extracts from Reports of his Lectures, &c. never before published, or little known to the Public. By G. W. MEADLEY. A Second Edition, in 1 vol. 8vo. ornamented with a richly engraved Head of Dr. Paley, by Engleheart, from a Painting by Sir Wm. Beechey, 10s. 6d. boards.

12. THE LIFE OF LUTHER; with an Account of the Early Progress of the Reformation. By ALEXANDER BOWER, in 8vo. 12s.

An ample and impartial life of Luther has long been regarded as a desideratum among literary men. Even in the native land of the Reformer a premium was about ten years ago ineffectually offered for an essay on this subject. Mr. Bower has at last endeavoured to fill up this chasm in biography. An appendix to the work contains a variety of particulars relative to contemporaneous history, and biographical notices of the most distinguished reformers.

13. THE LIFE OF JOHN KNOX; containing Illustrations of the History of the Reformation in Scotland, with Biographical Notices of the Principal Reformers, and Sketches of the Progress of Literature in Scotland, during a great Part of the Sixteenth Century. To which is subjoined an

Appendix, consisting of Letters and other Papers hitherto unpublished. By THOMAS M'CRIB, D.D. Minister of the Gospel, Edinburgh. The Third Edition, in 2 vols. 8vo. 1*l.* 1*s.*

14. AN HISTORICAL ACCOUNT of the Lives and Writings of JAMES I. and CHARLES I. and of the Lives of Oliver Cromwell and Charles II. after the manner of Mr. Bayle. From Original Writers and State Papers. By WILLIAM HARRIS, in 5 vols. 8vo. 3*l.*

Besides a Life of the Author and a Copious Index, this Edition comprises the Life of Hugh Peters, the Executioner of Charles I.—a Tract, by the same Author, which had become extremely rare and valuable.

15. THE HISTORY OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY, from its Institution to the End of the Eighteenth Century. By THOMAS THOMSON, M.D. F.R.S.L. and E.F.L.S. 4to. 2*l.* 2*s.*; large paper 3*l.* 12*s.*

This work is published as a companion to the Abridgment of the Philosophical Transactions in 18 vol. 4to. It is a view of the rise and progress of the various sciences which form the subjects of the contributions to that voluminous and important work, interspersed with biographical sketches of many of the most illustrious contributors. It contains two complete lists of the Fellows of the Royal Society, from its foundation: the one chronological; the other alphabetically arranged.

16. THE EDINBURGH ENCYCLOPÆDIA, or Dictionary of Arts, Sciences, and Miscellaneous Literature. Conducted by DAVID BREWSTER, LL.D. F.R.S. and F.A.S. Edin. with the Assistance of Gentlemen eminent in Science and Literature. To be completed in 18 vols. 4to. Sixteen Half Volumes, or Parts, have already appeared, price 1*l.* 1*s.* each.

The complete originality of all the articles (written expressly for the work) distinguishes the Edinburgh Encyclopædia from every work of a similar kind. The volumes already published contain numerous inventions and discoveries, and many original views in the Arts and Sciences, which were never before communicated to the Public.

It is proceeding with as much dispatch as is compatible with originality, and the time requisite for the actual investigation and examination of recent inventions and discoveries.

17. ANNALS OF PHILOSOPHY; or, Magazine of

Chemistry, Mineralogy, Mechanics, Natural History, Agriculture, and the Arts. By THOMAS THOMSON, M. D. F.R.S. L. and E. F. L.S. &c. *Published in Monthly Numbers, price 2s. 6d. each.*

Of this work, four volumes are complete. It commenced in January, 1813, and has been continued with the most complete success, as well as in its circulation as in the number of valuable contributions with which it has been honoured by some of the most eminent philosophers of the present day. The re-opening of a communication with the Continent cannot fail to increase its interest and value.

18. SPECIMENS OF THE CLASSIC POETS, in a Chronological Series from Homer to Tryphiodorus, newly translated into English Verse; and Illustrated with Biographical and Critical Notices. By CHARLES ABRAHAM ELTON, Author of a Translation of Hesiod. Elegantly printed in three Volumes, 8vo. 1*l.* 16*s.*

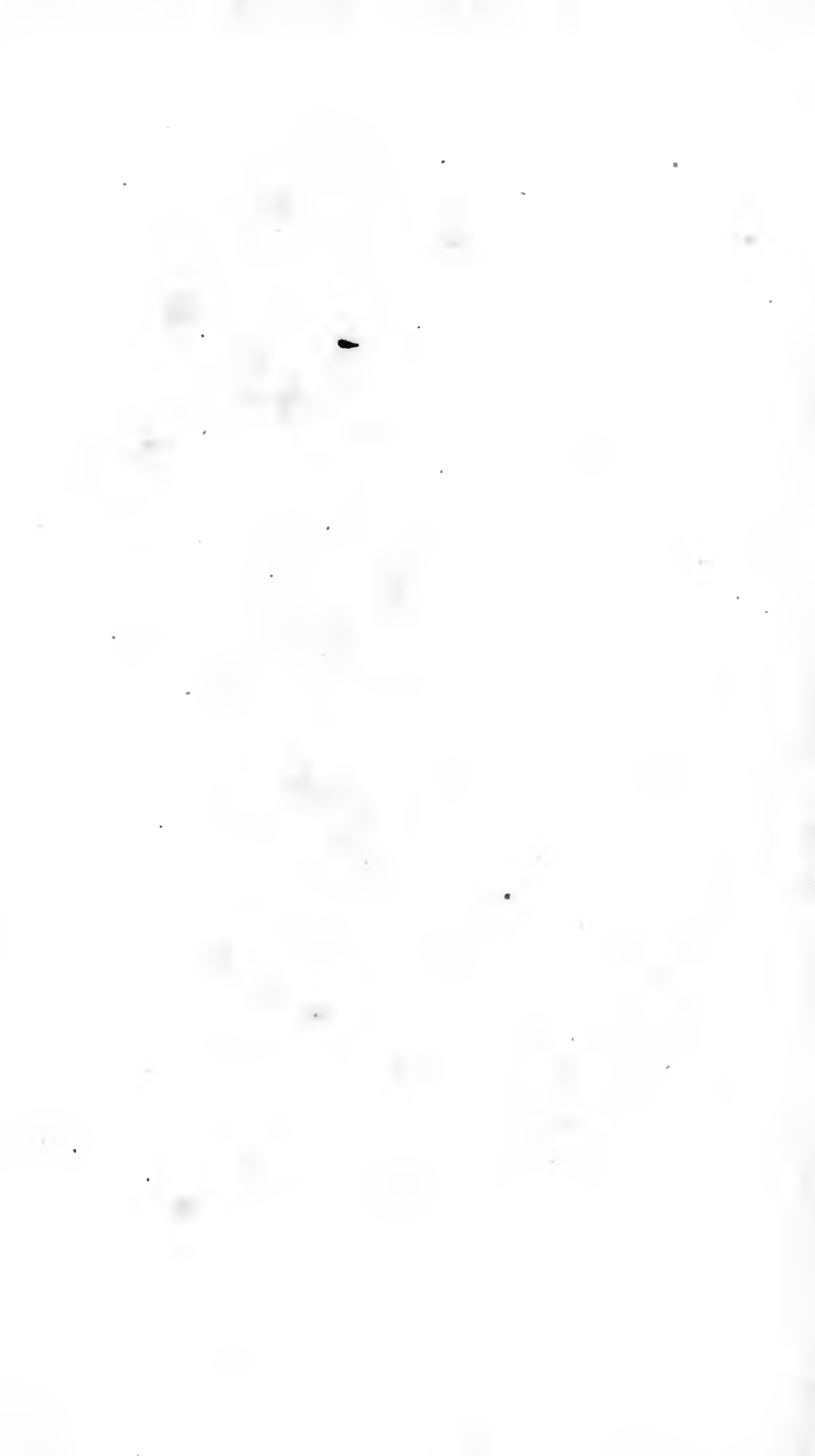
The following is a list of the classic authors from whom Mr. Elton has translated some of the most interesting specimens: several of them had never before been presented to the English reader; and the translations of many others are not at the present time to be procured.

GREEK AUTHORS: Homer, Hesiod, Archilochus, Tyrtæus, Sappho, Erinna, Mimnermus, Theognis, Anacreon, Simonides, Pindar, Onomacritus, Bacchilides, Callistratus, Lycophron, Theocritus, Aratus, Callimachus, Apollonius Rhodius, Cleanthes, Rhianus, Bion, Moschus, Nicander, Meleager.

LATIN AUTHORS: Lucretius, Catullus, Virgil, Gallus, Tibullus, Horace, Propertius, Ovid, Albinovanus, Severus, Gratius, Manilius, Dionysius, Phædrus, Persius, Lucan, Valerius Flaccus, Silius Italicus, Martial, Sulpitia, Statius, Juvenal, Dionysius Musicus, Oppian, Nemesian, Calphurnius, Quintus Smyrnæus, Ausonius, Claudian, Avienus, Rutilius, Nonnus, Musæus Coluthus, Tryphiodorus.

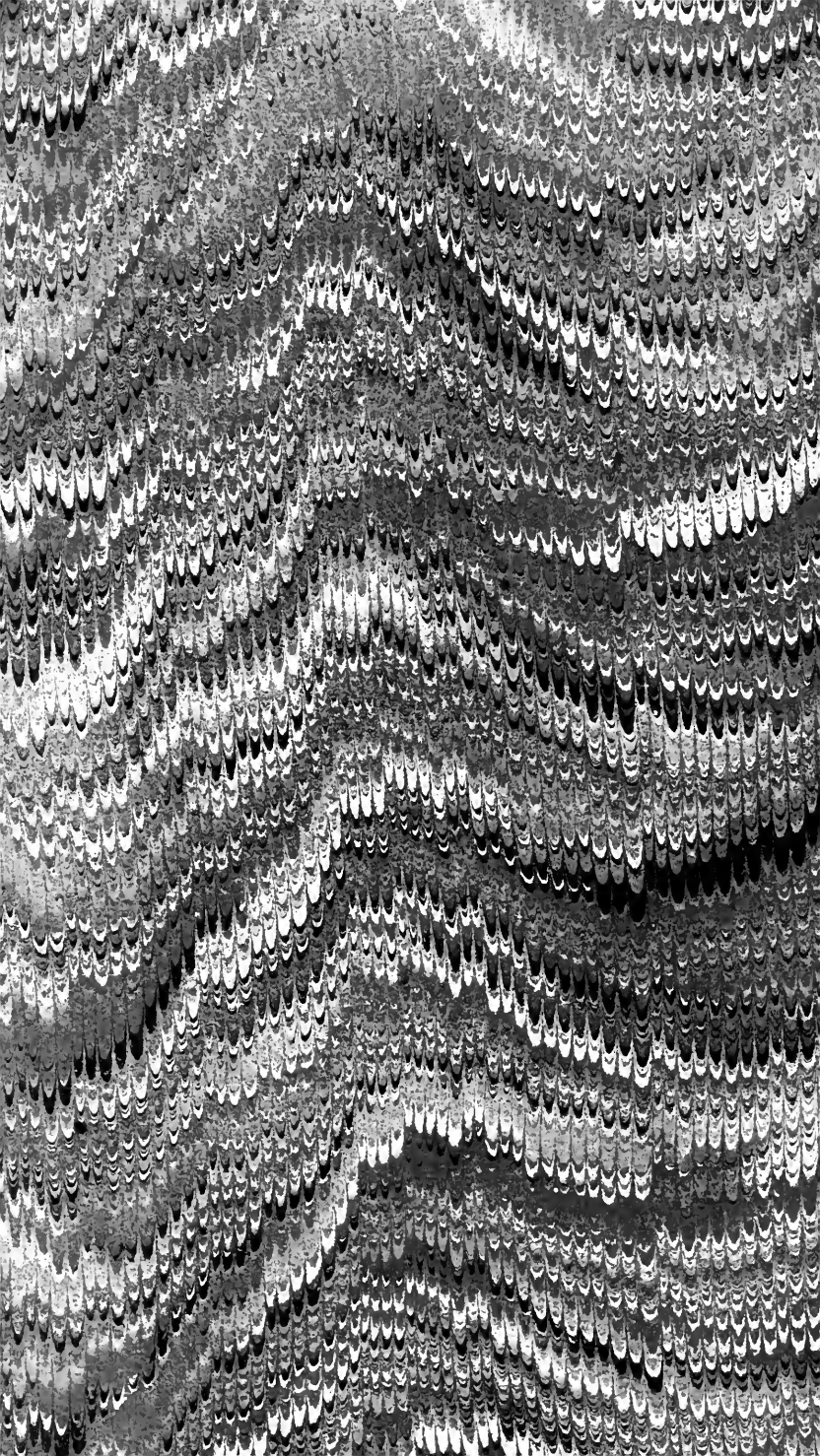
19. THOMSON'S NEW GENERAL ATLAS; compiled and adjusted from the best systematic Works; and the most authentic Accounts of recent Voyages and Travels.

The work will contain about fifty-six maps of imperial folio, on a scale corresponding with the celebrated Atlas of D'Anville. It is published in numbers, at intervals of two months, each No. price 8*s.* containing four maps, full-coloured. Nine numbers are already published, and the remainder are in great forwardness: when finished, the whole will form the most complete, and by far the cheapest Atlas ever offered to the Public.











A 001 052 635 8



3 1210 00787 8299

